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extended attributes

Phoenix OS/2 Society

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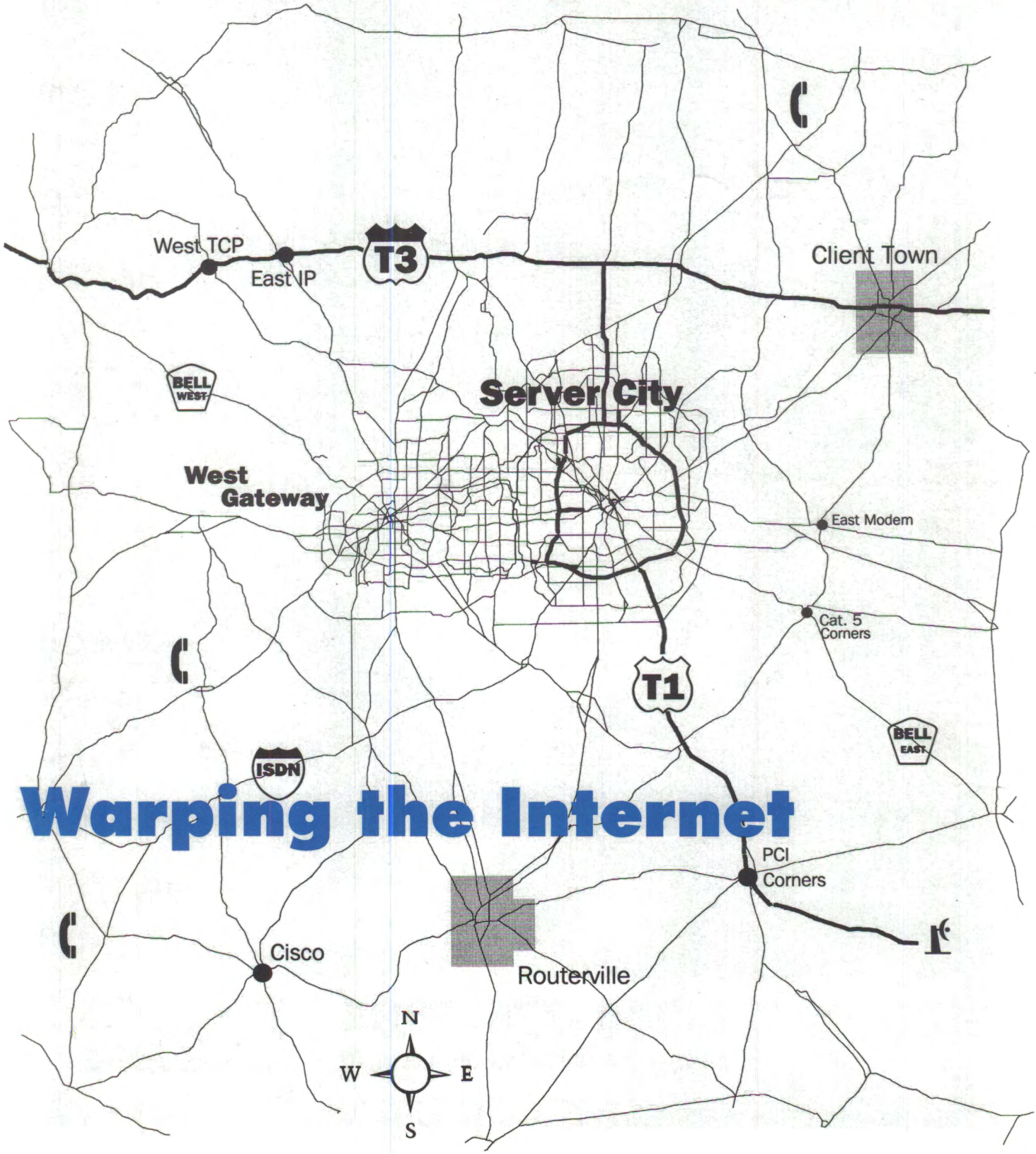

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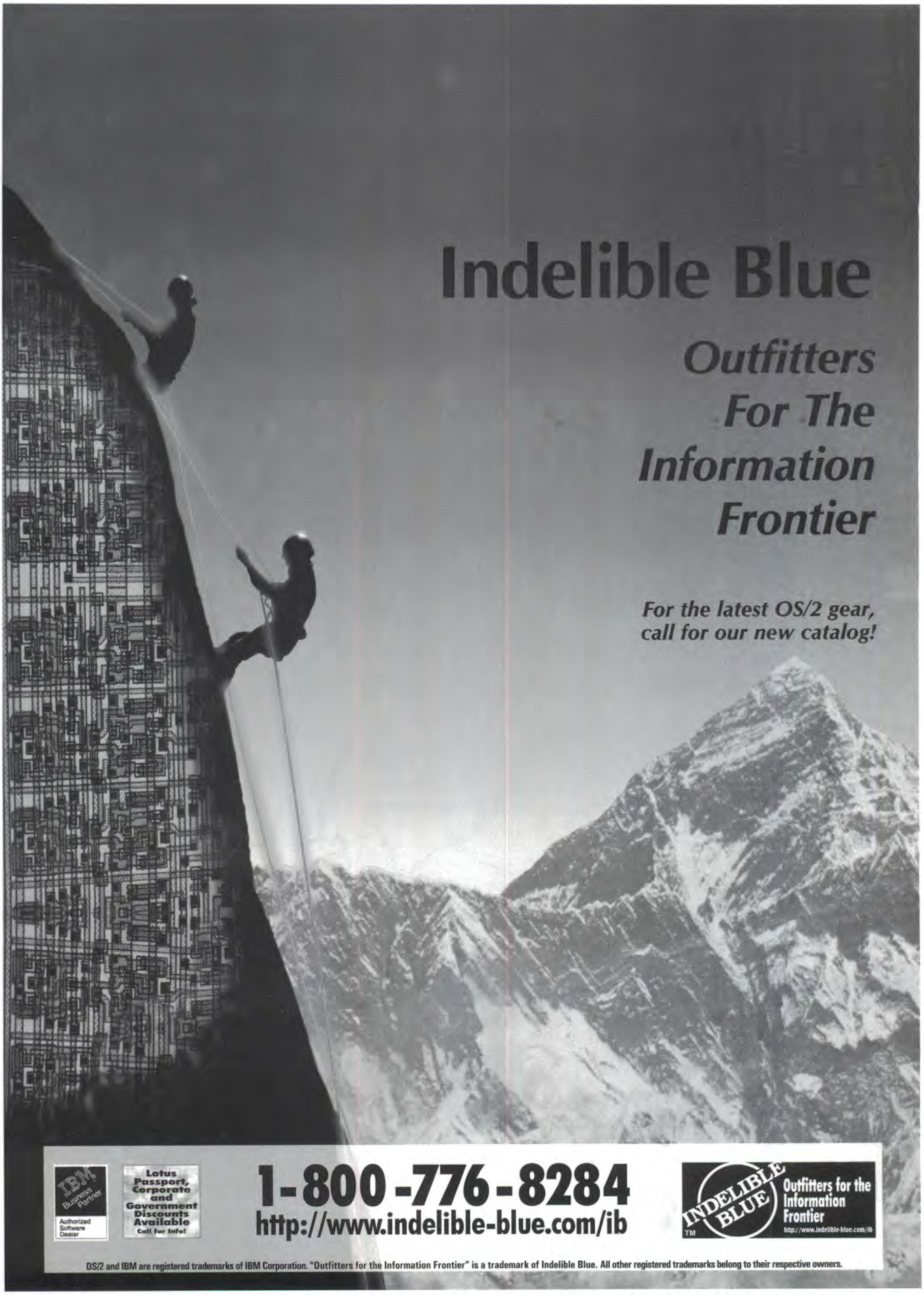
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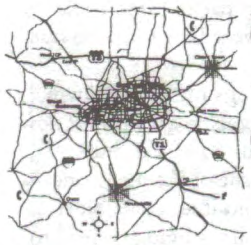

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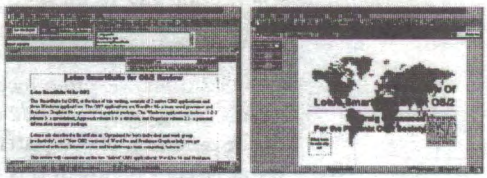

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extended attributes

extended attributes is the award winning monthly magazine of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc.

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Growth and decay

by Bill Schindler, editor-in-chief

A couple months ago, I noted in this column that it appeared that there would be no speech software development kit (SDK) for OS/2. I'm pleased to report that IBM has apparently had a change of heart; an updated beta of the OS/2 speech SDK will be on the next Developer's Connection CD-ROM.

By way of comparison...

As OS/2 users, we often focus on what's going on in the OS/2 universe to the exclusion of computer industry at large. Because of this tendency, we often assume the problems we perceive are OS/2-only problems.

Most of the OS/2 software vendors that I've talked to in the last three months have told me that their sales are flat. The monthly sales of our book *Teach Yourself REXX* are also flat: no increase, no decrease.

Does this mean that OS/2 is dead, or at least dying? Not necessarily. Consider that:

- Retail sales of computer software are down, and appear to be continuing to shrink.
- According to several industry pundits, the home computer market is stalled, or possibly even shrinking.
- The selling price for most software has dropped. (That's good news for your pocket book, but bad news for software companies' R&D budgets and future versions of their software.)
- A large percentage of the computer books being published are about the Internet and/or Java.
- Computer book sales are down significantly.
- Most "general" computer user groups are shrinking in size.

It appears that most of the computer industry is in a slump. In comparison, OS/2's market statistics look wonderful.

Growth

This issue of extended attributes is the largest issue we've ever published. There's an amazing amount of information packed into these 28 pages. And every bit of it done by volunteers.

Which brings me to the down side of the magazine growing. It now takes me about a week to put together an issue of the magazine — all done on volunteer time. Since I also need to earn a living, I need to "give away" a few hours of this work to someone else.

So, if you're interested in being calendar editor, maintaining a database of advertising (what ad goes in which issue), or performing some other editorial or artwork related function, email me at `editor@possi.org`.

Speaking up

Next month's theme is on speech recognition. If you have any VoiceType tips, please send me an email or drop a quick note in the mail.

Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc (POSSI) is an organization of computer users with an interest in IBM's OS/2 operating system.

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How to demo OS/2

by Esther Schindler

It's bound to happen. Sooner or later, a co-worker will ask you, "Why do you use OS/2?" An Internet correspondent will demand that you justify your choice. Your Mom will ask, "OS/2? What's that?" Suddenly, you'll find yourself in the position of describing, explaining, and showing off the capabilities of the operating system.

In this article, I'll give you advice on how to show off OS/2 effectively. I have some experience with this topic, since I earn part of my living by teaching OS/2 classes to corporate users for an international training company. I've also done plenty of OS/2 demos, formally and informally. Also, as a writer in the computer press, I've sat through an astounding number of product demos; I have learned just how good and how bad a demo can be.

You might not be interested in becoming a one-person IBM marketing department, but at least you'll be able to represent your perspective accurately, and to earn the respect of the non-OS/2 users around you.

Your ability to demonstrate OS/2 effectively can have quite an impact. Back in the OS/2 2.0 days, one college student showed his Dad why he thought the operating system was so cool. Dad was impressed, and asked the kid to show OS/2 to the people he worked with. The company executives (including Dad) then called IBM to find out more—and that's how State Farm adopted OS/2.

A matter of attitude

If you're a nontechnical OS/2 user, you may be intimidated at the thought of demonstrating OS/2 to someone who knows more about computers than you. Don't be. If you know the technical details, that's great. But as a nontechnical user, you have an advantage: the fact that you *don't* have to be a computer wizard is a mark in OS/2's favor.

Admit freely that you don't understand memory management, priority-based scheduling, or the System Object Model. And, you're delighted to add, you don't have to know all that stuff. You use OS/2's benefits to enhance your life, not to replace it. If you like OS/2 enough to use it, your message can be, "You don't have to be an expert to appreciate this." Be honest, and let your enthusiasm show.

In fact, your enthusiasm is your greatest asset. A successful OS/2 demo is mainly the result of a good attitude, and an underlying joy that creeps through everything you say. People pick up on this even when they aren't aware of it. If your listener is only vaguely interested in the topic, he'll still understand that OS/2 is exciting enough to elicit such delight.

Don't invest any energy in putting down "the other guy." In fact, I strongly recommend that you never mention the competition unless explicitly asked. Your intent is to convince your listener that OS/2 is good, not that Microsoft is evil or that Windows ought to be banned by the Geneva Convention. The listener has several alternatives to Windows; it's your job to explain why OS/2 is a good choice. Besides, complaining about Windows can put your presentation in a bad light in several ways. It can make you seem whiny, or out of touch, or like you're criticizing your listener's choices.

That last item can make a big difference in how your demo is received. Your purpose should always be to enhance the listener's knowledge, to give him perspective, never to "prove him wrong." The fastest way to get someone to quit listening is to make him feel like an idiot, as anyone who has interacted with a teenager can tell you.

What do they need?

Many of us OS/2 users are technology enthusiasts. We love OS/2 as much for how it works as for what it can accomplish. As a result, when some people show off the operating system, they demonstrate what *they* think is cool, as opposed to what their listener cares about.

Before you start talking, listen. Find out how the other person uses computers, what he needs to accomplish with them, how well he understands them. Only after you empathize with your listener can you communicate with him about OS/2—or anything else, for that matter.

Tailor your presentation so that you speak in their terms. Explain the benefits from their perspective, not your own. A lawyer cares about how OS/2 will make her life better, how she can use it to print while downloading from the Internet while managing her schedule; she probably doesn't care about the differences between preemptive and cooperative multitasking, or even the cool stuff your kid found on the Internet. If you talk about technical features instead of what she'll get out of using OS/2, you'll lose her.

It's an old lesson in sales, but speak from the viewpoint of benefits. Explain the benefit, then demonstrate the feature that makes it possible. OS/2's multitasking might be technically interesting, but what makes it valuable is what it can *do*. Focus on what you can *do*, and your demo will be a success.

The other piece of general advice that applies to any demonstration is: *Show, don't say*. Never tell someone what a product is capable of, when you can show the feature and the listener can observe for himself. I very rarely say anything that's evaluative, such as "OS/2 is the best operating system for multitasking." I simply show feature after feature that shows multitasking; if I do a good job, the listener concludes, on his own, that OS/2 is really great at multitasking. (A good demonstration is educational, even when the listener ostensibly knows the subject quite well.)

One of my pet peeves, as an observer at many demos, is a presenter who will wave the mouse pointer around on the screen and talk about a feature. First, the mouse waving around is incredibly distracting; more importantly, if you have a product feature then please just *show it to me*—I'll make my own opinion about how good or important or innovative it is!

Setting goals

Once you understand your audience, consider (at least for a moment) what your own goals are for the demo. What are the essential messages you want to communicate? What is it that you really want your listener to understand? How do you want the listener to respond by the end of the demo—do you want her to attend a user group meeting, to buy a copy of OS/2 on the spot, to recommend it to her employees?

Keep those goals short, sweet, and to the point. When I teach OS/2 to my corporate students, I have four full days in which to introduce the topic; my goals are to communicate OS/2's robustness, flexibility, consistency, and connectivity. If you have only fifteen minutes, you'll have to be much more precise. Pick three main points you feel you *must* get across, and structure your demo so that you say that and very little else.

Planning a demo is sometimes feasible, especially when you're nervous about it or you'll have an "important" audience—such as your family, at Thanksgiving dinner.

Any good presentation builds on itself. If you keep your goals in mind while you cover different aspects of the product, you'll come back to the main topics, again and again. Repetition matters, especially when you can express the same idea in three or four different ways.

With your goals forefront in your consciousness, plan out the demo from the perspective of, "What can I show in order to demonstrate that capability?" When you have it right, it's as if you're guiding your listener down a path to an expected conclusion. Often that means you need to invest time in advanced preparation; you might need to preinstall an application, or change some desktop settings so that everything is ready when it's time to demonstrate a given feature. Take the time to do so, or the demo will be very rough and you'll lose the audience's attention.

What works

The advice above is a general guideline for how to do any kind of product demo, but how about some specifics regarding demonstrating OS/2?

Most of us consider OS/2's major benefits to be its robustness and its ability to multitask. Those are important to would-be users, too, but they're also concerned with the ability to run the applications they know about—which means Windows applications, in most cases. I usually focus on those three subjects.

To demo multitasking, choose applications that visually *do* something. Don't show a database performing a big sort; even if that's a typical use, your listener won't see anything happen and will assume that not much is going on. Instead, I use the DOS shareware application, Namegram, which generates anagrams from peoples' names. ("Esther Schindler" translates into "Clients shred her.") While I install an OS/2 application from diskette, Namegram will continue in the background, with words flashing by. Namegram is just lighthearted enough to be amusing for its own sake, but it's also clearly representative of a computer actively doing something useful.

If you don't have the opportunity to install software ahead of time, here's another way to accomplish the same thing. Change the object properties on the Solitaire game to Create New Window. Start four copies of Solitaire, and set all of them to Autoplay. Tile them, so your listener will see four copies of an application running. (Mostly, I use this example to demonstrate how OS/2 manages session priority; click on the WPS background, then on title bar for one of the Solitaire games, to see what happens. However, it should work for a multitasking demo, too.)

If you're demonstrating multitasking, don't format a diskette while you do something else. While Windows 3.x is notoriously bad at diskette access, you're apt to get the (unspoken) response, "But I buy preformatted diskettes!" My real-world example is to install an application from diskette in the background while I show some other feature of the operating system. (That's how I really work, after all.) Choose a small application that comes on one diskette (you don't have to belabor the point); you can use the application later on in your demo.

Since most computer users are familiar with Windows, I often find it necessary to address their concerns about running Windows applications. Most of them simply don't know that their current applications will run in OS/2. You don't have to berate them about the subject; just tell them so.

Because I don't want to knock the competition, I always treat OS/2's superior memory protection lightly. I say, "I'm sure that this has never happened to you, but just say... just *imagine*... that a Windows application crashed." This always gets a laugh. Then I go ahead and show how OS/2 runs DOS and Windows applications better, since it keeps each application in a virtual DOS machine. Create a program object for a Windows application (even Write), and scroll through the long list of DOS options, while you say, "You don't have to adjust any of these... but OS/2 gives you the power to do so, with *this* much control."

Learn when to shut up. The detailed advice I've given here might make you think that OS/2 demos are a long, complex procedure. That's not the case. Remember, your goal is to communicate just a few points. If you can do that quickly, that's all to the better. On a recent airplane flight, the entirety of my "OS/2 demo" was saying, "I use OS/2 because it's robust—it doesn't crash—and it runs all the applications I need. It runs all your Windows applications, you know." My seatmate (who turned out to be production director for a well-known PBS TV show) replied, "It runs Windows applications? I didn't know that." I nodded, but I didn't say another word about the topic. All I wanted to do was pique his interest; I didn't want to force him to make a grab for my laptop. I wasn't trying to do a hard sell. The next time he hears about OS/2, however, I'm certain he'll actually listen.

Summary

Speaking of shutting up, it's probably time that I do so on this topic. I hope I've helped you to learn a little more about how to effectively communicate about the operating system.

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Hardware report

by Esther Schindler

A while back, I asked Phoenix OS/2 Society members to answer a web-based survey about the hardware they own. 77 people responded. With no fanfare, here's the results.

Multiple machines

Only 39% of us use OS/2 on just one computer. 38% use two OS/2 systems; 9% use three, 5% use four, and 9% use five or more OS/2 systems.

Of the 22 responses to "How many of those are laptops?" the majority (18) answered "one." Two more people use two OS/2 laptops, and the other two use five or more OS/2 laptop computers.

OS/2 is used on a wide variety of processors:

- 2 systems were 386s
- 45 OS/2 systems are 486s
- 25 people use Pentiums that are 100 MHz or slower
- 28 use Pentium systems between 100 MHz and 166 MHz
- 11 of us use Pentium or Pentium Pro computers, 166 MHz or faster
- 14 systems use Cyrix, 586, or other non-Intel based computers

The variance in RAM wasn't quite as great. 39 of the respondents have between 16 MB and up to 32 MB of RAM. 48 said "32 MB, up to 64." 19 respondents have 64 MB of RAM. Only 6 had more; only 7 have less than 16 MB of RAM.

Hard disk space does vary. While 26 people have under 500 MB of hard disk space, the majority have hard disks with 1 to 4 gigabyte capacity. Those drives are almost evenly split in thirds, between SCSI, IDE, and EIDE formats.

There's also a wide range in monitor size and video resolution. Everything is represented, from 14" monitors at 640x480 to 17" monitors at 1280x1024. The most popular brands for video cards are ATI (19), Matrox (18), and Diamond (14), though plenty of other manufacturers are represented.

Other equipment

We own plenty of other devices. Twenty-one have an Iomega ZIP drive; 21 also have a scanner. Five respondents own a digital camera. 49 of the 77 own a tape backup unit; those tape backup units are predominently QIC (35), though SCSI (17) is certainly represented.

Most of us have more than one printer; 77 people responded with a total of 114 answers, which comes out to an average of about 1.5 printers per person. While we own just about every kind of printer, most of them are black-and-white laser printers (47) or color inkjet printers (36).

.press release

MainActor offers OS/2 animation power

MainConcept has released MainActor, a modular animation processing and editing package for OS/2, Windows 95, and Windows NT. MainActor can load, edit, play, and create or convert more animation formats than any other program on any platform!

Supported formats include: AVI, BMP, DL, FLI/FLC, GIF, GIFAnim, IFF, IFF-Anim3/5/6/7/8/J, JPEG, MPEG-I/II, PCX, QuickTime, TGA, and WAV.

MainActor can perform the major tasks in animation processing and editing, such as joining pictures into animations, processing animations, animation and picture conversions, processing animation timecodes, splitting animations into pictures, and much more. This is accomplished in a completely format-independent manner. Basically, you load, edit, and play any of the supported formats, and convert them into any other format. For example, you can convert MPEG to GIFAnim, AVI to QuickTime, or FLC to MPEG.

Features include:

- AVI and QuickTime support for all major codecs. Even full Motion JPEG is included, Motion JPEGs created from capture hardware (like FAST and Miro Hardware) are now also supported. AVIs and QuickTimes are automatically interleaved while saving.
- MPEG-I/II creation supports many options, like interlacing, setting of bit rates and much more. The GIF and GIFAnim saver options include transparency, interlacing and NetScape's loop extensions support.
- All MainActor generated animation formats (AVI, FLI/FLC, GIFAnim, MPEG-I/II and QuickTime) have been compatibility tested on all major platforms, including Windows 3.1 / 95 / NT, ActiveMOVIE, MacOS, and OS/2.

MainActor features an integrated Video Capture Interface, a palette editor, and many advanced animation and picture processing functions.

Price and Availability

MainActor is available at `www.mainconcept.de` and at `www.bmtmicro.com`.

MainActor is shareware; registration is $60.

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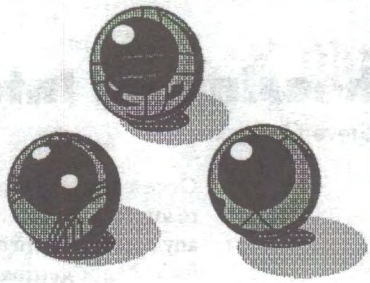

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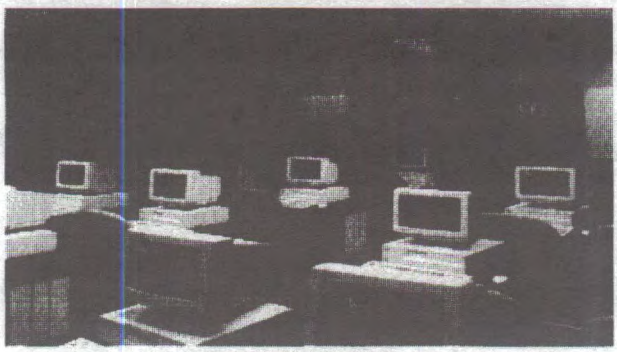

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feature

Choosing an Internet service provider

by Steve Gurnick

Once again I spent a half-hour trying to log onto the Internet to see if I had any email from friends or family. No luck; I kept getting dropped. And this wasn't America Online either! "What the heck, it's a free connection," I keep telling myself, "I'll just wait until tomorrow morning and try again." Well, the next morning, it's the same old story: a half-dozen attempts to log in, all with no result except frustration, and it's before 6:00am! They can't be busy at this hour! Is it a dirty connection? Funny I can get into CompuServe any time I want!

When I picked up the April edition of *PC World*, I spotted an article on the "Best Places to Live and Work"; Phoenix is rated 19 out of 300 cities. Why is Phoenix rated up there just after several Silicon Valley cities and the center of Bill Gate's empire? It's based on *Money* magazine's annual quality-of-life report combined with *PC World*'s research on telephone services, Internet access, and other work related issues. So I thought, if Phoenix has so many service providers, maybe it's time I look for another one, even if the one I have costs only the time it takes me to log in at 16.8 Kbps.

Lots of choices

The first thing I did (when I was able to get back on-line) was search for Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the Phoenix area (serving the 602 area code). *Boardwatch Magazine* presented me with a list of 95 ISPs. Now that's a list to be reckoned with! Of course, not all of these providers are local, and looking at the list, it's certainly not all inclusive, because right away I noticed AOL and CompuServe weren't listed.

So, where do you start with a list this large? I decided to look at the local providers first, because as we all know, you're supposed to get the best service by staying close to home. Reliable service was my main search criteria in looking for a replacement service provider. This criteria cut the list down to 30 providers; the next cut whittled the list to 21 by removing those who didn't answer the phone, or provided only business related services (such as ISDN) in which I wasn't interested.

Pricing

The cost of service for a personal Internet account was very similar in most cases, with the usual monthly rate around $19.95. Some services bill quarterly, or annually, but most use a credit card monthly charge. The lowest charge was $9.95 per month, which provided only 15

TABLE 1. A comparison of ISPs

Provider	Domain name	Cost/Month	Setup	Hours	Web page	OS/2 Support
Inficad Computing and Design	INFICAD.COM	16.95	16.95	unlimited	5 MB	No
Phoenix Computer Specialists	PCSLINK.COM	19.95	19.95	150.00	5 MB	No
AZLink Internet Services Inc	AZLINK.COM	25.00	20.00	unlimited	5 MB	doubtful
Primenet	PRIMENET.COM	20.95	30.00	unlimited	5 MB	yes
GoodNet Corp	GOOD.NET	19.95	19.95	unlimited	5 MB	maybe
TrekNet Internet	TREKNET.NET	19.50	19.50	unlimited	10 MB	yes
Internet Access Inc	NETA.COM	20.95	20.95	150.00	5 MB	yes
Illusions Internet Solutions	ILLUSIONS.COM	15.95	none	unlimited	5 MB	yes
Crossroads Communications	XROADS.COM	19.95	10.00	250.00	5 MB	knows someone?
Fiesta Net	FIESTANET.COM	19.95	20.00	150.00	5 MB	no
Futureone Inc	FUTUREONE.NET	19.95	9.95	200.00	5 MB	yes
Dancris Telecom	DANCRIS.COM	16.50	16.50	unlimited	5 MB	yes
Innovative Data Solutions	IDSWEB.COM	25.00	none	unlimited	5 MB	no
Evergreen Internet Inc	EVERGREEN.COM	19.75	40.00	150.00	5 MB	no
Impulse Data		16.50	none	unlimited	2 MB	maybe
Southwest Link	SWLINK.NET	19.00	20.00	150.00	5 MB	no
Systems Solutions	SYSPAC.COM	19.95	15.00	150.00	5 MB	yes
CyberVault Inc	CYBERVAULT.COM	20.95	none	150.00	5 MB	no
NetZone	NETZONE.COM	19.95	19.95	unlimited	5 MB	maybe
Netwrx	NETWRX.NET	19.95	19.95	unlimited	10 MB	maybe
Internet Now		9.95	none	15.00	3 MB	no

access hours per month with additional charges for each hour over the first 15. The table shows the general pricing structure of the ISPs surveyed. It also doesn't reflect the guarantees made by some of the providers, such as "no busy signals." The chart also leaves out the user-to-modem ratio, and the promises made to keep the ratios below a given level.

Keep in mind that new ISPs start up all the time. Invariably, when discussing the subject of choosing an Internet provider, someone would suggest I check out another one. Also, some of these providers offer more than one plan, while others provide higher levels of service, paying for a year in advance, and group memberships. I've taken only the basic plans here.

Fast reliable service

Another criteria useful in selecting an ISP is whether the connection is fast, and usually available when you want to use it. Those providers catering mainly to business are usually a good bet for the personal user, because the business users generally go home and aren't on the system when you want to be on-line. All providers contacted utilize 33.6 kbps modems, and the majority of them are of the USRobotics variety. If you are concerned with a finicky modem though, you should be sure to ask. The backbone utilized by the contacted providers varies a bit more, with UUNet being the most common, followed by MCI and GoodNet.

After the pricing information was gathered, I went back on-line to `www.cnet.com`, and checked out their latest poll on ISP satisfaction for the Phoenix area. Table 2 lists user satisfaction with local providers, the ranking is based on 618 total CNET member-submitted ISPs. Both local and national ISPs are considered in the rankings, and obviously not all ISPs from Table 1 were included in the review.

Choosing the right provider

So there you have it in a nutshell. All you have to do is determine the amount of time you want to spend on line, and how much you want to spend on a monthly fee, choose the type of service you want — local versus national — and try to make the best decision. Hopefully, this short piece will help point you in the right direction.

TABLE 2. Ranking of ISPs

Name	Rank
Arizona StarNet	251.00
CyberHighway Internet Services	224.00
Dancris Telecom L.L.C.	38.00
FlashNet	547.00
GetNet International, Inc.	418.00
GOODNET L.L.C.	600.00
Internet Access	23.00
Netzone	456.00
Sedona On-Line, Inc.	97.00
Southwest Link	14.00
Star Net	86.00
Systems Solutions Inc.	170.00
The River Internet Access Company	29.00

feature

Tips and tricks for Warp on the Internet

Here's a few tips and tricks for using OS/2 Warp on the Internet.

Netscape

In the current address field of Netscape type in about:global. Others to try:

- about:cache
- about:memory-cache
- about:image-cache

Robert Rosenwald

And if you occasionally try to access a Web site that won't let you in because you're not running Netscape 3.0, try this:

- Right click on the Netscape icon and choose "Properties" (or "Settings on OS/2 Warp 3)
- Select the "Program" tab
- In the "Parameters" field, add a "-3" (that's a hyphen followed immediately by a three)
- Close the properties notebook
- Start Netscape and try accessing the site again.

Connecting via CompuServe

Here is a tip when connecting to the Internet via CompuServe.

CompuServe has downloadable information on how to write the dialog to make a PPP connection from OS/2's TCP/IP, but sometimes it won't work even when configured properly. If so, look at the password you are using for CompuServe. Their rules require a string with an embedded special character. They will accept a BLANK as that special character but TCP/IP sees the blank as the end of string and stop sending the rest of the password.

To correct this, log onto CompuServe member services and change your password. Substitute a "." in place of the blank. Remember also to bring up your CompuServe dialer and change the password there, too. If you run a Windows browser and an OS/2 browser, and still want to keep the Windows browser (in spite of the fact that it is four times slower than the OS/2 version) you will need to make sure you have updated the password for the dialer that you use with Windows.

Everett W Cole

Internet applications

Two useful OS/2 programs:

- List Thread Viewer allows you to take listserv (or majordomo) digest files and view them sorted by message thread. It's easy to traverse the messages or change to a different subject. You can also delete messages and threads, save messages to disk, and print messages.
- PMStripper is a shareware program designed by Don Hawkinson. It strips graphics and HTML codes from web pages, allowing either direct printing of the ASCII text to a default printer, or saving to a file.

Vic Ridgley

review

IBM AntiVirus version 2.5

by Dennis H. Palmer

IBM Anti Virus version 2.5

IBM Corporation
www.av.ibm.com

Hardware Requirements:
IBM PC/ PS-2 or compatible
80386 or higher,
80286 in DOS
640K memory in DOS
4 M disk space

Software Requirements:
DOS: DOS 3.3 or above
Windows 3.1 or above
OS/2 2.0 or above
(including OS/2 Warp)
Windows 95

IBM AntiVirus desktop Edition Version 2.5 provides protection for DOS, Windows3.x, Windows 95, and OS/2, all in one package. The package I evaluated is primarily for stand alone computers; IBM also offers anti-virus protection for shared computing environments in a different package called the "Enterprise edition."

Since there are no known native viruses for the OS/2 environment, you might be unfamiliar with the topic. So let me begin by presenting basic information regarding viruses, how they're transmitted, and how anti-virus programs perform their magic.

Viruses

Computer viruses are simply computer programs. For the most part, a virus' most common "prime directive" is its own reproduction.

A typical virus will infect a computer via serial port downloads, a network link, or through the insertion of an infected floppy disk. The virus will then attach itself to, for example, a program file. When that file is later accessed, the virus attaches itself to more files.

Viruses can infect program executables and boot sectors of hard or floppy disk drives, and usually reproduce without the knowledge of the computer operator. You can easily visualize how quickly virus programs could infect entire companies without detection.

In addition to reproducing themselves and migrating to other computers, viruses are usually written to perform certain functions. These are usually timed by date, number of accesses, or some other means. Viruses may display messages across the screen, delete program files, or destroy boot sectors or other data. Some just continue to reproduce, bringing the performance of the computer to a standstill.

We will call the triggering of the virus program function "detonation" for the purpose of discussion.

Virus detection

There are two principal means of detecting virus infection. The first is known as *scanning*, and involves some form of comparison of hard drive or floppy drive files to a database of known virus fingerprints. The other method uses a *resident* program to detect "virus-like" activity. The resident program constantly watches the system for unauthorized hard drive accesses, unexplained holes in memory, or other activities known to be indicative of virus infections.

Along with stopping the spread of viruses, the most important feature of anti-virus software is to detect, remove, or disarm the virus before it detonates and does its damage. It must also detect the infection prior to the virus attacking the anti-virus software, which would leave your system unprotected without your knowledge.

Virus removal

The removal of an active virus file from a computer program is a somewhat tricky procedure. The anti-virus program must have some idea of either what the virus changes in the program file, or what the uninfected program file looks like prior to infection. In either case, with the huge number of viruses already in existence and with many more being written daily, the maintaining of data on all these viruses represents a huge undertaking by the company writing the anti-virus software.

The IBM solution

IBM AntiVirus protects your system in two ways. The first method is *scanning* where your system files are checked against known viruses. Along with manual scanning, AntiVirus offers automated checking of files by elapsed time. You can select automated checking, including which drives to check, what files to check, and whether to check for viruses within compressed files (such .ZIP or .LZH formats). In addition, you can request IBM AntiVirus to scan your system upon boot up.

During any automated scanning procedure, if AntiVirus detects a virus, you will be prompted for further scanning and removal options. Scanning results are written in log files that you can review.

The second method, called system shield, has many features. You can tell the program to check for DOS viruses whenever you start a DOS session. One interesting feature is AntiVirus' ability to disable an active virus, allowing the user to use the infected program without the virus actively running.

Additional system selections are to prevent DOS viruses. You can request that all DOS and Windows files be checked for viruses whenever accessed and can even automatically check diskette boot records whenever the diskette boot records are used. Additionally, you can request that diskettes left in floppy drives at shut down be checked during shut down for known DOS boot viruses. The program selects some but not all features of System Shield as well as Automated scanning as a default. The default choices offer excellent protection with minimal interference of normal system operation.

The latter, in my opinion, is one of the most important features of system shield. Perhaps you recall early "shield" type anti-virus programs, which tended to set off numerous false alarms. These false alarms tended to cause people to disable a large part of the automated virus protection scheme; as a result, the system was virtually unprotected. Protection against false alarms is extremely important for just that reason. Any anti-virus program must be in use to be effective. This program seems to excel quietly in that area as I have not experienced any false alarms in over four weeks of heavy use. My testing involved heavy DOS and Windows use. I found prior versions of IBM AntiVirus software to be very effective in the detection and removal of common DOS and Windows viruses.

I limited my testing of this version to my own system, which has no virus problems. It would have been very interesting to implant several known and common viruses to a sys-

tem for precise testing of its features, but, at present I have only my primary system in use. (You have to be careful what you ask for, you might get it!) Several articles have been written by other authors who tested this program on deliberately infected programs and have found this version extremely effective in this area. You might want to refer to George Penzenik's articles in last month's OS/2 E-Zine (`www.haligonian.com/os2/v1n12/ibmav.htm`) as well as articles in *OS/2 Magazine*.

IBM AntiVirus offers one of the most complete and easy to use Anti-Virus programs on the market today and is backed by one of the world's best anti-virus resources available. Further information is available at `www.av.ibm.com`.

This program comes with my highest recommendation. It is especially recommended for anyone who has had prior bad experiences with other products and is presently unprotected from viruses. With a selling price of under $50 from most vendors, it is an excellent value.

press release

DeskMan/2 v2.0 enhances OS/2

Development Technologies, Inc (DevTech) announced the availability of DeskMan/2 v2, which fully supports OS/2 Warp 4.0.

DeskMan/2 Version 2.0 includes a wide range of new features, adding a substantial amount of increased functionality. Users can now customize, manage, enhance, protect, and distribute the OS/2 desktop environment in a way that has never before been achieved.

In today's business environment, LAN managers, administrators, and executives need desktop management tools to be powerful, flexible, and secure. DeskMan/2 v2.0 incorporates powerful new and enhanced features such as: Access Control, Workspaces, live desktop synchronization, the MultiDesk Personal Desktop Facility and Workplace Shell Extensions.

New features

As access control and desktop security are increasingly critical to all corporate IS Managers, DeskMan/2 provides an Access Control Policy Facility. This feature authorizes access to desktop resources, such as objects, windows, and workspaces. In addition, the Access control system is seamlessly integrated with the network permissions, allowing the manager to have access to exactly who the user is or what group they belong to.

The Configuration Image Facility allows users to take a complete snapshot of the OS/2 configuration and greatly expands the DM/2 Image component. All of the important data that defines how OS/2 works: CONFIG.SYS, Warp Center definitions, STARTUP.CMD, INI files, Workplace Shell and WinOS2 desktops, LAN definition files, and user defined files are captured, validated, compressed, and stored in a single binary repository configuration. These repositories can be restored at any time to reset the system to that configuration. Snapshot definitions even include commands to run automatically before making and/or after restoring the configuration.

The MultiDesk Personal Desktop Facility allows each user to have their own, completely separate, personal Workplace Shell desktop. This facility allows the creation of different desktops with different sets of icons. Users have the ability to configure desktops in exactly the way that fits their needs. For example, in the workplace, managers can manipulate each workstation, only allowing mission critical information to be viewed by each employee. At home, parents can keep financial and other inappropriate information from appearing on their child's screen.

Workspaces

The Workspace Facility, the expanded functionality of the virtual desktop component VUEMan/2, gives users the ability to define separate, named, PM workspaces or "rooms," each with its own windows, task list, desktop, and context sensitive tools. Logical, separate Workspaces allow for a much more controlled and well-defined environment.

Additionally, these Workspaces can be optimized for different tasks. The desktop management suite includes a command line added to the Window List to keep often used applications and other tools easily accessible. It also contains window layouts, programming APIs, REXX enablement, and extensive on-line and hardcopy documentation.

Live desktop synchronization allows for saving and restoration of objects "on the fly." Changes to an object are automatically saved when the object is closed and updating is done automatically the next time that object is opened. This feature allows any folder or groups of folders to be synchronized and updated with the latest information automatically.

The enhanced Workplace Shell Extensions give users complete fingertip control over all operational characteristics, including object styles, menus, and IDs. Users can even position icons with to-the-pixel accuracy and assign hot keys to objects.

DeskMan/2 v2.0 is now available through dealers, mail order resellers, or direct by calling 215-739-4544.

Fruition

by Lee Baldwin

The Phoenix OS/2 Society has grown. Due to the efforts of several volunteers, the Society has doubled in size since January.

The results of the mass mailing of *extended attributes* appears to have been successful. Since the final results of the mailing are not in yet, the board and the staff of *extended attributes* have not yet made a decision about whether to do a mailing to the rest of the list.

As far as we can tell, we now have the largest OS/2 group in the world. It has been said that *extended attributes* is the largest OS/2-only print publication in the United States. A couple of months ago, I wrote that I carried the myth that the Society was the pre-eminent OS/2 group in the world. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for making that a reality!

OS/2 Marketplace

The results of the OS/2 Marketplace conference, to my way of thinking, were excellent. At the follow up meeting for the conference, the decision was made to wait another month before making the decision on whether to do another conference next year.

What will determine whether we do another conference will be based upon the response from the user group (POSSI) as to volunteers. These last few months have put a very heavy load on the core volunteers that made these projects happen. The time and financial drain, through loss of earnings, has made some of us step back from making an instant decision to go ahead with the Second Annual OS/2 Marketplace conference.

Where from here?

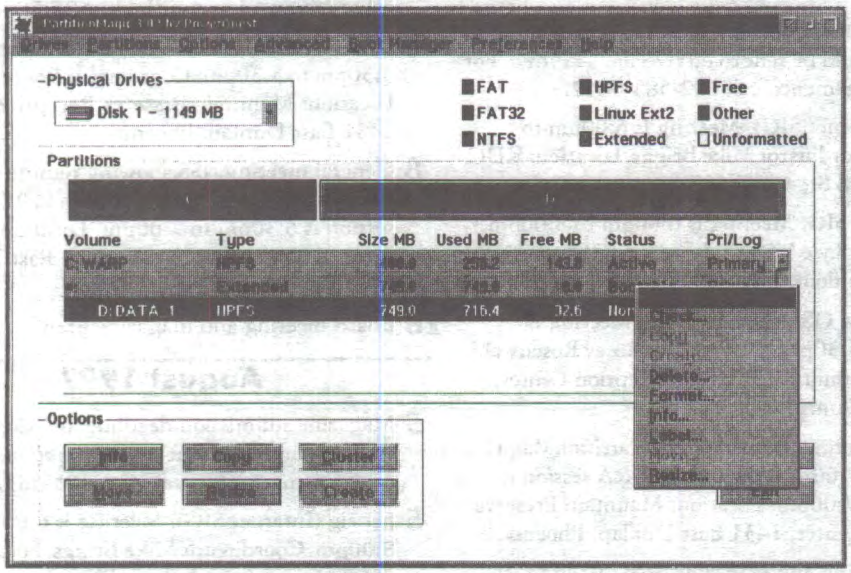
Where do we go from here? That is up to all of us. I am not speaking of the Board of Directors, but for the membership of this fine organization. Speak up, help out, write an article, get that product review in, go out and spread the word about OS/2, help another organization become what we have, share your copy of *extended attributes* with a new friend, do whatever you are comfortable with doing. Every little bit helps!

May meeting

You cannot partition your drives with prayer!

(with apologies to Jim Morrison and the Doors)

Do you want to change the sizes of your partitions but dread the thought of the backup—FDISK—restore routine? Are you running out of room or swap space on your hard disk? Did you know that you may be losing up to 40% of your disk space from large clusters? Do you want to try out another operating system without risking your existing setup? Find out more about how to solve these and other problems by attending the next general meeting of the Phoenix OS/2 Society on Tuesday, May 13.



Our guest presenter will be Gene Barlow, on behalf of PowerQuest Corporation. Gene will cover the cluster problem and will talk about other important hard disk organizing techniques that will make your system perform better and safer. He will also introduce us to the new features of Partition Magic V3.0.

PartitionMagic 3.0 is a revolutionary software utility that allows users to create, resize, and move hard-disk partitions on the fly and safely, without destroying data. This product set the standard in the marketplace, pioneering a way for users to reclaim lost storage space on their hard drives by adjusting cluster size while resizing partitions, providing solutions to safely manage multiple operating systems, and allowing users to organize and protect data. It is one of the most exciting utilities on the market today. PartitionMagic has won numerous awards, including the Fall 1995 Best of Comdex award.

Organizing the partitions on your hard drive is so easy anyone can do it in a fraction of the time it used to take. You'll wonder how you got along without this product.

Gene Barlow is no stranger to OS/2 user groups. He founded IBM's user group relations department, and has spent most of his career supporting computer user groups. You will come away from this meeting entertained and informed, with a better understanding of your hard drive and how to tune it for best performance.

Gene will provide time for an open Q&A period and will bring valuable door prizes, informative handouts, and a special on-the-spot user group price for those wishing to purchase this outstanding product at the meeting.

When and where

The general meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 13, at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center (1431 E Dunlap). The "random access" question and answer session begins at 6:30pm, and the meeting gets underway at 7:00pm.

As usual, the after-meeting-meeting will convene at Coyote Springs brew pub. We'll be joined there by Esther Schindler (who will be returning from the IBM Technical Interchange in St Louis, arriving straight from the airport) who will presumably bring everyone up-to-date on the very latest news.

Upcoming...

Back in February 1996, IBM's John W Thompson (then the general manager for Personal Software Products) promised that he'd come back in a year. Thompson has moved on to another position in IBM, but his successor, Michael Lawrie, has agreed to speak to us at our September meeting. Details will follow.

If you're a member of the Phoenix OS/2 Society and you have an email ID registered with us, you already know about the Society members listserv. (If you haven't been receiving user group e-mailings, drop a line to editor@possi.org, and we'll remedy the situation.)

In recent weeks, we've discussed having a "virtual" meeting online for members who cannot get to meetings. We're still working out the details, but it appears that, sometime in June, we'll have a user group meeting on the Internet Relay Chat (IRC), with guest speaker (guest typist?) Mike Cowlishaw—the developer of REXX and NetREXX. No matter what your geographical location, we hope you can make it to this experimental gathering.

General meeting

what

▲ PowerQuest showing PartitionMagic

where

▲ Mountain Preserve Reception Center
1431 E Dunlap
Phoenix, Arizona

when

▲ Tuesday, May 13, 1997
▲ 6:30pm: Q & A session
▲ 7:00pm: Regular meeting

Coming events

This is a list of events scheduled by the Phoenix OS/2 Society. Unless otherwise noted, active members may attend any scheduled event for free.

Meeting notes

For the latest updates on the Society's event calendar, check the Web site at `http://www.possi.org`.

For meeting information and other queries, call the Phoenix OS/2 Society's voice mail at 602-949-4341.

If you have suggestions, ideas, or comments on the content of general meetings, contact the Society's Program Chair, Esther Schindler, at the general meetings or send email to `esther@primenet.com`.

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June

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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July

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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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31						

September

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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

May 1997

5 Magazine submission deadline for June issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

6 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

6 Developer's SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

13 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

13 General meeting. PowerQuest's PartitionMagic. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

24 Board meeting and magazine prep. Meeting is 10:00am to 1:00pm. Eat a brunch, learn about the inner workings of the Society, and help get extended attributes ready to mail. Location: Bill and Esther Schindler's house in north Scottsdale.

June 1997

3 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

3 LAN SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Elliot Abramowitz. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for July issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

10 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

10 General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

21 Board meeting and magazine prep.

July 1997

1 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

1 Developer's SIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for August issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

8 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

8 General meeting; ISS showing remote service management. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

26 Board meeting and magazine prep.

August 1997

5 Magazine submission deadline for August issue. Articles should be sent to `editor@possi.org`. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

5 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

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23 Board meeting and magazine prep.

September 1997

9 General meeting; IBM PSP General Director Mike Lawrie. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

mike@possi.org

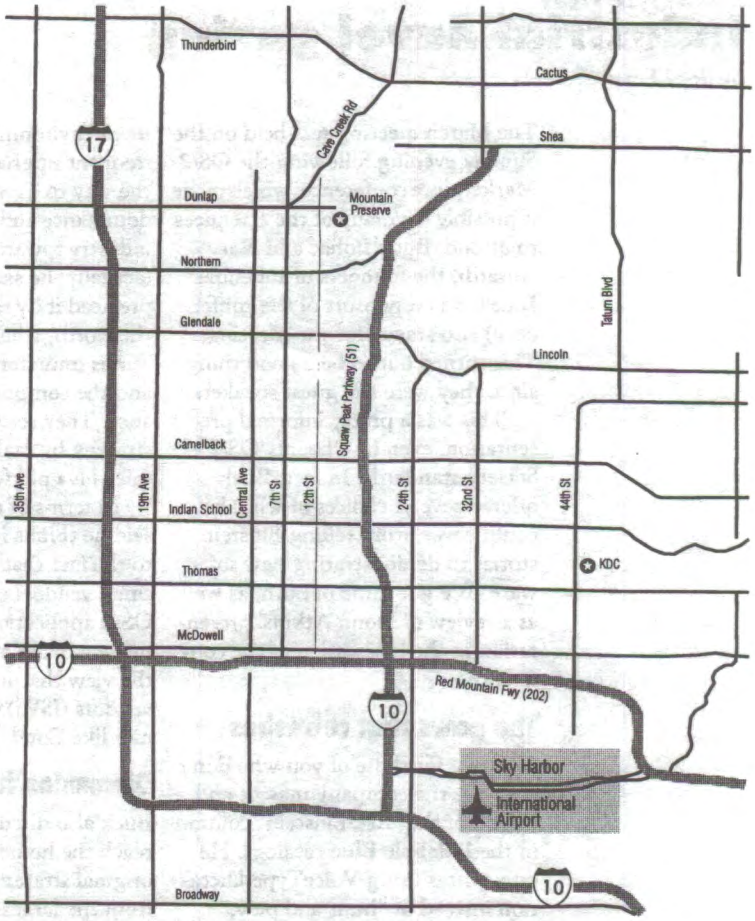
Meeting locations

General meetings are held at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

From the Black Canyon, exit at Dunlap and head east. From the Squaw Peak, exit at Northern. Go west to 12th Street, turn right and go north to Dunlap, turn right, and it's two blocks up on the right.

The "How OS/2 Works General Interest Group" now meets at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center on the afternoon of the general meeting.

The Internet SIG, Developer's SIG, and LAN SIG all meet at Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44th St, Suite 400. That's just north of Thomas, in the building with the green dome. Plenty of free parking space is available in the garage behind the building.



If the mailing label on the back cover says "sample," then this may be the only copy of *extended attributes* that you will ever receive. If you want to keep getting the magazine (and receive all the other benefits of membership), you must join! A 12 month membership in the US is only $30. (See the form for membership pricing in other areas.) Tear out the application form, fill it in, and mail it with the membership fee to the Society's address.

sigs Special Interest Group news and meetings

Developer's SIG

by Lyle Wilson

Over the next several months, the Developer's SIG will embark on an overview of OS/2 development. To keep up with us, see `www.possi.org/devsig.htm` for details. As usual, the SIG meetings are on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm at the Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44 St, Phoenix.

On May 6, we will have overview of OS/2 development. We'll talk about language options and vendors, and give a brief look at the IBM Developer Connection (DevCon). We'll also consider the issues of writing to the PM APIs versus IBM's OpenClass Library versus VisualAge Visual Builder.

At the next meeting, July 1, we'll talk about installing, configuring, and starting to use IBM's Visual Age C++. After all, getting started can be the hardest part. We will look at fix packs, WorkFrame, Makemaker, and packaging.

On September 2, we tackle the topic, "Exploring IBM's VisualAge Visual Builder." We'll build a small flash card program, starting with one I wrote for my kids.

On November 4, we'll give an in-depth look at software product packaging. In particular, I expect we'll examine the install utility on the DevCon. Future topics may include Visual Age SmallTalk and VisualAge Java (what we're all waiting for!).

net.sig

by Mike Briggs

Connected at last! At the last meeting we finally connected our machine to the Internet at T1 speed. Special thanks are owed to IBM's Mike Drapkin and POSSI's own Lyle Wilson for their help in setting up the connection.

The first thing we did was download Netscape for OS/2. Unfortunately this was the day after IBM posted the Netscape update. Downloading the file took a while due to high demand on the server, but we eventually got it all in our computer. The rest of the meeting was spent configuring Netscape and exploring a few Web sites.

Plans for the next meeting include downloading the Netscape plug-in pack, and possibly remote installation of Fix Pack 1 for OS/2 Warp 4. We'll also give priority to learning about the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) as we are thinking about holding virtual meetings for members who cannot attend the regular meeting. See you on May 6 at the next meeting.

Lastmonth

Industrial navel gazing

by Joel Frey

The March meeting was held on the Sunday evening following the OS/2 Marketplace conference, which made it possible for many of the attendees to attend. Buck Bohac and Katy Ansardi, the founders of Indelible Blue (and cosponsors of the conference) also stayed for the meeting. This turned out to be a good thing since they were the guest speakers.

This was a pretty informal presentation, even by Phoenix OS/2 Society standards. In fact, Buck offered several choices of what he could cover, from telling Einstein stories to demonstrating new software. We got some of both, as well as a review of Donn Atkins' presentation at the last session of the conference.

The paws that refreshes

Einstein, for those of you who don't know, is the company mascot and author of the "Ask Einstein" column in the Indelible Blue catalogs. He now writes using VoiceType Dictation instead of "hunt and paw," which was murder on the keyboards, and that's not even considering the drool factor.

Einstein usually grabs a quick sandwich for lunch (someone else's) and goes right back to work. Buck says Einstein is pretty mellow but he does get riled around strangers. (Einstein! What do you think of Bill Gates? "Grrrrr!")

Industry watch

I won't go into detail here on Donn Atkins' presentation. Buck's take on it is that IBM is focused on their business customers who are tired of the array of platforms and development environments, and the need for frequent upgrades. They see Java as the way to overcome Microsoft's dominance and to move the software industry toward a commodity model (actually, he said "paradigm," but prefaced it by saying he hated to use the word), where the operating system is immaterial to the application and the computer is just an appliance. They see OS/2 as part of this strategy by making OS/2 the premier Java platform.

In terms of the conference, Buck said he thinks it opened IBM's eyes to the fact that there is a network of small vendors out there developing OS/2 applications and trying to make a living at it, when IBM had the view that independent software vendors (ISVs) were larger companies like Corel.

Discussion hits home

Buck also discussed IBM's failure to reach the home user market. The original strategy was to work down from the largest enterprises to the smallest, then when OS/2's presence was established in those markets, to go after the home user. Somewhere along the way, this strategy went awry and IBM started the TV campaign for OS/2 Warp before the enterprise portion of the strategy was complete.

In response to a later question, Buck said that IBM hasn't totally given up on the home user market. They still plan to reach it eventually, but IBM is not going to spend a lot of marketing money on it in the current situation.

During the demo part of the presentation, Buck showed a variety of software, including a few simple utilities they've developed. One utility translates phone numbers that spell something back into digits so the number is easier to use. Another utility searches the local cable TV directory. Buck said he wouldn't mind giving them away, but he's afraid someone might expect tech support for them.

V Trex

We also got a short demo of Aviar's V Trex by John Urbaniak. V Trex is a voice-enabled SQL generator that interprets natural language statements to perform simple DB2 queries. One of the examples used was "Who makes over 20,000?" Using predefined associations for "who" (name), "makes" (payroll table and salary), and "over" (relational operator), the product produced a complete query. While obviously intended for use by the lay person with the support of a technician (at least initially), V Trex also shows the potential for VoiceType in applications beyond text dictation. (I would settle for that right now since my keyboard is getting flaky and I've been too busy to open it up to clean it.)

As you know, demos are one of those "you had to be there" things, but I've already used up my space anyway. Besides, the Indelible Blue catalog and Einstein are much better sources of information about OS/2 products than is this column. In fact, Einstein is pretty astute when it comes to other operating systems.

Einstein! What do you think of Windows 95? "Ruff!"

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FAX for OS/2

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.letters

A matter of opinion

Letters to the editor should be sent to editor@possi.org, or mailed to:
Editor, extended attributes
Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc
5515 N 7th St, Ste 5-133
Phoenix, AZ 85014-2585

We reserve the right to edit all letters for content, readability, and length.

Dear Editor,

I read with interest Burke Swanson's review of the latest version of Alphabet Zoo. I was a little disappointed that the reviewer did not rate the program higher. If you recall, my son Nigel and I reviewed a prior version of this product. Just to follow up on our review, I asked Nigel how he feels about Alphabet Zoo:

Dad: "Are you still playing Alphabet Zoo?"

Nigel: "Oh sure, wanna see me play it?"

Dad: "Okay, show me. How do you like it?"

Nigel: "It's fun, especially the movies."

Nigel went on to play the game. He is capable, at age 5½, of loading and playing it without supervision.

I noticed from his collection of CD-ROMs that Alphabet Zoo is usually no more than third or fourth from the top of the pile, if not at the top. This pile is how I can tell what he has played on the computer.

Based upon Nigel's continued enjoyment of the game, and the fact that it is one of a very select few programs that has never been reinstalled, I would recommend that Alphabet Zoo be included as an OS/2 must have if you have children using your computer.

Bill Teags

We received a sample copy of the April extended attributes, courtesy of Dave Zechmann, and we are *impressed*. We already found useful material and help in this issue. You are running a close second to the late *OS/2 Magazine*.

We probably will never make it to your meetings, but we would like to support your efforts.

Ron Boschelli

.press release

QuickFlick adds streaming video

Practice has released QuickFlick, a new 32-bit native OS/2 plugin for Netscape Navigator.

QuickFlick is a streaming video plugin that is specially designed to let you experience over 20,000 web sites designed for QuickTime, including sound, video, and QTMA music (QuickTime's version of MIDI).

QuickFlick is installed with QuickMotion version 1.3, which also includes bug fixes and enhancements to digital movie support.

QuickFlick is *free* but is subject to the 15-second restriction if you are running the demo version of QuickMotion.

You can now purchase QuickMotion entirely online via a secure ZipLock container for just $25. A full registered copy of AnPoCODEC 6 Windows-style AVI support is also included in the package. All these features make QuickMotion an essential multimedia upgrade for OS/2 Warp.

For more information and to download QuickMotion 1.3 and QuickFlick, visit `www.practice.xo.com`.

.deals

Specials from Sundial for POSSI members

The following prices will be honored through May 20, 1997. You *must* be a member of the Phoenix OS/2 Society to take advantage of these special prices!

- ❍ $44.50 for the Clearlook word processor (normally $89)
- ❍ $59.50 for the DBExpert database (normally $119)
- ❍ $89.50 for the Mesa 2 spreadsheet (normally $179)
- ❍ $29.00 for the Mesa 2 Passport to upgrade from the DeScribe Voyager or Frequent Flier CD (normally $39)
- ❍ $44.50 for Relish to manage your time (normally $89)
- ❍ $69.50 for 2-user Relish Net (includes Relish Net server software)—this is a real deal! (normally $119)

Add $7.00 for shipping in the United States and Canada; $20.00 for shipping to other destinations. You can pay with check, money order, MasterCard, Visa, or American Express.

When you order, Sundial will need to know your name, mailing address, phone number, email address, and (this is very important) that you are a POSSI member.

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Enter Internet

by Marilyn Pizzo

Many of us are connected to the Internet in one way or another. We use it for a variety of purposes—email, searching for web sites, etc. We're connected through a service provider to give us the access we want. As you know, many ISPs do not have separate software for OS/2 and some may not even want to talk about using their service through OS/2. No matter which ISP you use, they must give you some pertinent information, but we will discuss that later.

Getting started

First, where did IBM hide the TCP/IP goodies in OS/2 Warp 4? In OS/2 Warp 3 they were on the Bonus Pak CD. That is as logical as anywhere to look, but you won't find it in amongst the Bonus Pak offerings in Warp 4.

With the networking enhancements included in OS/2 Warp 4, we also find the Internet access tools we need. So, even as a home user with a single PC, you get to install networking components. As you progress through the installation process and select individual components to be installed, don't overlook the networking choices.

When OS/2 Warp 4 asks if you want an easy or advanced installation process,I recommend that you choose the advanced option. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to complete an advanced installation process for anything. As a general rule, advanced installations give you options to customize the installation, whereas the easy installation makes some presumptions and does the choosing for you. Personally, I like to see my choices, even if I don't change anything.

Using the advanced installation option, an **OS/2 Warp 4 Setup and Installation** window appears. Mark the **TCP/IP Services** box. It is not necessary to mark anything else for the Internet goodies when setting up a single PC. After pushing the **Next** button, you're presented with a configuration window that lists the options you selected. You should see the TCP/IP Services as well as (probably) the Network Adapters and Protocol Services. Follow the key listed in the window to check if you must configure anything. The Network Adapter and Protocol Services area should be configured as "no network adapter" for the individual PC.

Push the **Install** button and all the neat components, such as gopher, newsreader, dial other Internet providers will be installed. When the installation process is complete, there will be something new on the desktop: WebExplorer and Get Netscape.

Hooking up

Before we can use these, we must be connected to a service provider.

This involves subscribing (paying money) to an Internet service provider so you have access to the Internet. The choice is yours. The ISP's are very close in price and services. You should look at their plans and how much you will be using the Internet to decide which is best for you.

IBM has an Internet service, if you want to use it. To find this dial-up, open **Programs** from your Desktop. Then look for **Internet Utilities** and open it. You will see two telephones, a blue one and a white one. The blue phone is for the IBM Internet dialer. When you open this folder you will be prompted through several screens, and eventually connected to the Internet through IBM. This process takes only a few minutes. In exchange for your credit card number you get an email address, a password (which you can change), and a list of access numbers to dial. If you travel, the list of phone numbers covers most cities in the US plus 800 numbers if you are in a remote area. Unfortunately, local ISP's don't cover a large area of the country, so your dialing area is limited.

If you don't use the IBM Internet Dialer you can use any other service provider. This involves opening **Dial Other Internet Providers** and filling in the information required. The information you need should be provided by your local service provider. Quite often it will be in a "readme" file when you first download their software. When you check out service providers, be sure they will give you such information as the Domain Nameserver, Domain Name, POP Mail Server, Reply Domain, IP Address—to name the major areas. If they won't provide this information—don't use the service. Most ISPs realize that a lot of people use other dial-up software besides theirs and are very cooperative. Once you have the proper information entered into the **Dial Other Internet Providers** area, you can use that to access the Internet.

Basic tools

Just when you thought you were done with the Internet connection... Now you need an email program and a web browser. OS/2 Warp 4 provides you with "Ultimail" to use to check email. It is a no frills application that serves the purpose it was intended for. There are also other OS/2 native email packages available that you may prefer—PM Mail and Postroad Mailer are two of them. Again, it is your choice to go with what is in OS/2 Warp or expand beyond the included tools.

OS/2 also provides a very good web browser in WebExplorer. Double click on the WebExplorer icon and then choose the modem option (since you are connecting to the Internet through a modem). Be sure your modem is on! This will open the browser and take you to its home page. Take a few minutes to investigate the different options and settings that are available in the WebExplorer. You can change the default from the web page that originally appeared to the POSSI page or any other site. Even if you don't change anything, it is worth looking to see what is there.

You can create bookmarks at any site, so you can get back to it quickly. We all have our favorite areas (sports, cooking, etc). If you're like me, after you hunt and search, you don't write down the web address, and you can't find the site again. Just bookmark it; when you want to check the latest sports scores, click ⇨

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- **Organized** links to over 600 other web pages containing OS/2 information
- Web browser-based **Discussion Forum**.
- **Secure** online shareware registration and commercial software purchasing.
- Mirrors of several useful sites such a **The Warp Master Updates Page** and **OS/2 Connect**.

Users' Comments

"I just found your site and wanted to congratulate you on doing such a great job in getting this site started. I've wanted to find a central place (such as www.windows95.com) for finding OS/2 shareware: what's out there, descriptions, etc. And I'm delighted to see that you look like you're going to try to make this into THE place to find this information."

"I also love having an easy place to register shareware."

"Just found this site reading OS/2 e-Zine!. Very nice. Hope you can keep it up and running as Hobbes is a hit and miss."

"Thanks a bunch for setting up the OS/2 Supersite. It's a great resource, very well done, and I hope it's a great success for you."

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on the bookmark, and you will go directly to the site you wanted.

OS/2 Warp 4 also gives you another option, Netscape for OS/2. Yes, Netscape has a native OS/2 version out now, free for the downloading. It is really easy too. I created a separate directory to download the file to and then unzipped it. It is a lengthy file so allow plenty of time to download. The unzip and installation process are quick and easy. Even I can do them. Once you have installed Netscape for OS/2, dial up your Internet provider and check out the features in Netscape. Decide which browser you like better.

If you like to participate in newsgroups, NewsReader/2 provides the access you need to subscribe to your favorite newsgroups and read the articles.

The Internet has proven to me to be a lot of fun. Through Yahoo or any other search engine you can seek a specific topic. It is fascinating where some of the web sites are located (even in other countries). You can spend hours investigating the World Wide Web and have fun too.

Utility diskettes

There certainly won't be any fun on the Internet if you can't start your computer from the hard disk. It is important that, before you go very far in experimenting and exploring OS/2 Warp 4, you create Utility Diskettes "just in case." The chances are good you will not have a problem with OS/2. But if you do and you can't access the hard drive, you will need these diskettes to get to a command prompt, start an editor, check the hard disk for errors, backup and restore your system, format a disk or hard drive, and define partitions on a hard drive.

The Utility diskettes are simple to make. Open **OS/2 System** and **System Setup**. Double click on the **Create Utility Diskette** icon. You will need four blank 1.44mb diskettes labeled "0" through "3." OS/2 will prompt you to decide what drive you are using for the diskettes as well as the source directory. Since OS/2 Warp 4 is on CD-ROM, the default drive will be your CD-ROM (you do have to insert the CD into the drive). From there you are prompted to label and feed the four diskettes as needed. Put these diskettes away in a safe place. In the rare event that you have a problem and Alt+F1 (at the white box) doesn't give you access to any recovery choices on that screen, these diskettes will allow you to boot up and get a command prompt.

This is not meant to scare you away. After all, OS/2 is the most stable operating system for our PCs. It was meant to shed a little reality on computing life as we know it. I learned the hard way that if you have a problem, you don't necessarily have to reload OS/2 to solve the problem, although sometimes that is the quickest solution.

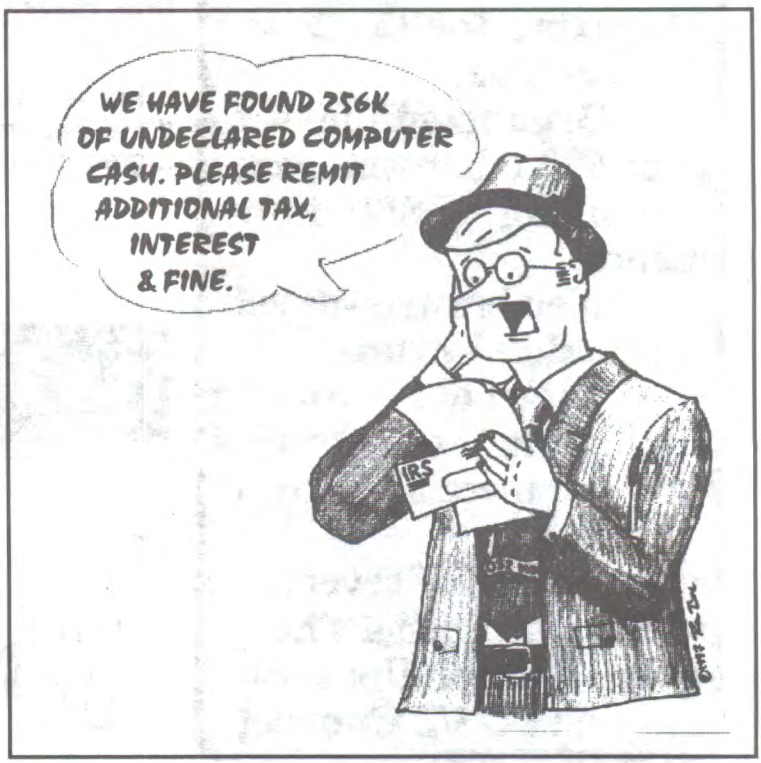
Tip

Have you ever clicked on a button on a toolbar or anywhere only to have nothing happen or something strange and unexpected? (If you say "no," you don't use your computer much, do you?) Don't panic. The first thing to do is to check that the button you clicked on popped back out. This is a very simple troubleshooting process that can solve a lot of problems.

Conclusion

The Internet holds a lot of information that is just waiting for us. Now that you know how to find the dial up and web browsers, you can explore the World Wide Web any time you want. If you want to learn more about the Internet you might want to stop by the net.sig sometime.

Although my 486 PC ran OS/2 Warp 4 just fine, it did have limitations—mainly the lack of speed and capabilities to run VoiceType. Now that I have gone deeply into debt, and I have a new "super" computer. I am ready to jump into speech recognition. I have been waiting patiently for this, so we can now go through the entire speech learning process together. Although I am not quite sure who will be teaching whom to speak and listen!



review

PMfax from Keller Group

by Marilyn Pizzo

PMfax version 3

Keller Group

In today's business world, the fax machine has almost become a necessity. Most of us can't even remember using the "snail mail" method of communicating written copy. With the improvement of fax machines and the widespread use of computers, software developers decided to help us by writing fax software. Keller Group is one such product developer. We are familiar with their product, Faxworks for OS/2, that comes with the bonus pack. They also developed PMfax, now up to version 3.

PMfax is a 32-bit fax software for OS/2. It uses OS/2 printer drivers for printing so it can print faxes on any OS/2 supported printer. PMfax also supports OS/2 fonts for text operations including using the integrated Adobe Type Manager in OS/2. All you need to load PMfax is a PC running OS/2 Warp 3.0, 4.0, or later, compatible fax hardware, and a mouse. Support is available for earlier versions of OS/2.

Basics

I found PMfax easy to load. It created a program object on the desktop (providing you give it permission to do so). The first time you use PMfax, you need to supply a little information about the port used by your fax hardware and your modem.

The toolbar provides single click access to the menu items. A right click of the mouse provides you with pop-up menus. As you place the mouse over a toolbar button, the message line at the bottom of the screen tells you what that button will do. Using drag-and-drop you can rearrange the toolbar buttons, remove unwanted buttons from the toolbar, and add to the toolbar by dragging the command from any menu to the toolbar.

When you are ready to actually send a fax you can play some more. After preparing your fax and selecting Send Fax, you may select one of their cover sheets (or add your own) and fill in the information needed (from, to, etc.) to complete your fax. A phonebook option lets you enter frequently used names and numbers. Once you push the Send button, away it goes. A log keeps track of all your faxes.

PMfax also receives faxes. This is accomplished using OS/2 background threads so the program can receive faxes without disrupting your work. Create faxes in an OS/2 application, or from a DOS or Windows application, and print them to the FxPrint printer.

Getting fancier

If you really want to customize your fax document, save your signature or "rubber stamp" image in an OS/2 bitmap file or PCX file; then drag the file object to your fax document. Using the same procedure you can paste any bitmap or PCX file on your fax document. The tools provided to edit your fax documents allow you to not only do your basic editing but also erase and draw.

PMfax is much more than your basic fax software that allows you only to type text and use a single boring cover sheet. PMfax is versatile and uses OS/2 to its advantage. You can even drag-and-drop fonts and background colors from the OS/2 Font Palette and Color Palette to do some customization. PMfax provides excellent tools to work with and gives you the options to edit and increase resources (fonts, cover sheets, bitmaps). I would recommend PMfax to any OS/2 user.

PMfax is available through electronic product delivery. See Keller Group's web site at `www.kellergroup.com`.

press release

Lotus Word Pro OS/2 add-on

Version 3.0 of TinkBar for Word Pro for OS/2 has been uploaded to `hobbes.nmsu.edu/pub/incoming/tink40S2ver3.zip`

This release corrects problems in the first release and cleans up the readme file. An installed version of Word Pro 96 for OS/2 is required.

TinkBar for Lotus Word Pro for OS/2 adds an extra icon bar to Word Pro and adds the following user functions:

- Print to FaxWorks or FaxWorks Pro FAX utility (all versions)
- Print immediate without a printer dialog box.
- Print only some pages you can select and don't print the rest.
- Change document background color to an off white.
- Change the document background color back to white.
- Insert "curly" quotes.
- Insert a single "curly" quote.
- Insert a © copyright symbol.
- Insert a ™ trademark symbol.
- Insert ® registered symbol.
- Insert an unchecked checkmark box symbol.
- Insert a checked checkmark box.
- Seek and delete the first frame.
- Set use defined envelope style
- Create envelope
- Insert an "en" dash.
- Insert an "em" dash.
- Insert legal "section" symbol.

All these functions come with source LScripts, the icons, and the already constructed "Tink Bar," and detailed instruction and documentation. It's all freeware from the Lotus "L-Team" volunteers found in the GO WORDPRO forum of Compuserve and also in the Word Pro User Discussion group located on the `www.lotus.com` Web pages.

TinkBar is not a supported product of Lotus Development Corporation. Followup questions may be directed above or to USENET group `comp.os.os2.apps`. Additional freeware may also be found in the WORDPRO Compuserve forum library.

review

Lotus SmartSuite 96 for OS/2

by Craig Greenwood

SmartSuite 96 for OS/2 consists of two native OS/2 applications and three Windows applications. The OS/2 applications are Word Pro 96 (a team word processor) and Freelance Graphics 96 (a presentation graphics package). The Windows applications are 1-2-3 release 5 (spreadsheet), Approach release 3.0 (database), and Organizer release 2.1 (a personal information manager package).

Lotus' ads describe the SmartSuite as "Optimized for both individual and work group productivity," and "New OS/2 versions of Word Pro and Freelance Graphics help you get connected with easy Internet access and breakthrough team computing features."

This review will concentrate on the two native OS/2 applications: Word Pro 96 and Freelance Graphics 96. While these applications are heavily touted as "team enabled," I evaluated them on a stand-alone system.

System Requirements

The recommended minimum hardware requirements are: 486/66, VGA video adapter and display, mouse or other pointing device, and CD-ROM drive. You'll need either OS/2 Warp 3 or OS/2 Warp Connect Version 3 with FixPak 26 (or later), or OS/2 Warp 4 and FixPak 1 (or later). I used OS/2 Warp 4 running on the minimum recommended processor (486DX-2x66) with 36 MB of RAM. I also have a 1MB video card running at 800x600 and 64K colors.

SmartSuite 96 for OS/2

Lotus Development Corp
Cambridge, MA

This review was held up for a week due to a bug I encountered while attempting to install FixPak 1 (FP1). It turns out that if your system has multiple physical hard drives connected to an intelligent I/O controller card, after FP1 is installed OS/2 no longer sees the second physical drive or any of its logical partitions. See the sidebar for the fix.

Once my system was running with FP1, I attempted to install Word Pro 96 and Freelance Graphics 96. I say "attempted" because I ran up against a bug here too. The installation program terminated with the message "Unable to Access the Registry." I spent several days wandering around in a labyrinth of technical support telephone menus and getting shuffled back and forth between OS/2 technical support and Lotus technical support. Finally, a Lotus technician told me that, since the FP1 was not yet a general release (at that time), the technical support team could not put it on their machines; therefore, they could not yet support the product. Dead end.

The problem was eventually solved by a customer support agent for Lotus' Windows products, who searched the tech support database and came up with a fix. Apparently this problem is a result of the installation program looking for some registry files that are standard in Windows 95 and which have to be created in OS/2. To fix it: At an OS/2 command prompt in the root directory of the boot drive, type INST_DOS DOS. This creates the three registry files that the SmartSuite installation routine looks for.

Word Pro 96

Now that SmartSuite was finally installed, I was anxious to find out what it was like. The 136 page manual describes Word Pro 96 as:

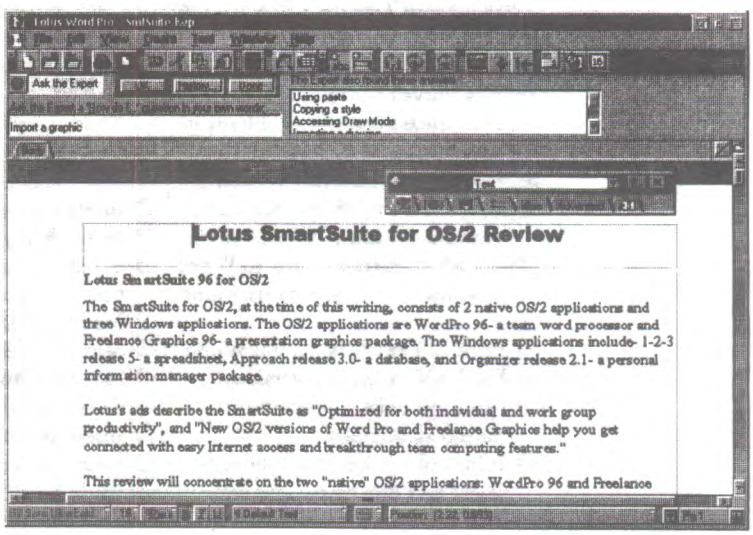
- A WYSIWYG word processor,
- A team word processor that allows collaborating and sharing of documents,
- A smart word processor that provides automated tools such as SmartMaster templates, Smart Correct, Assistants, InfoBoxes, and Divider Tabs to create documents,
- A word processor that is integrated with other products through LotusScript, importing and exporting of files, the Internet, and the Lotus User Interface.

The first thing I realized is: I'm going to need help to learn how to use this thing. I am familiar with WordPerfect for Windows. A lot of the things I attempted to do the way I am used to doing them, got me nowhere.

The manual gives a good overview of Word Pro's potential, as well as specific instruction on basic tasks. All the manuals are available on the CD-ROM as Adobe Acrobat PDF files. The installation program is more than happy to install Adobe Acrobat for Windows for you; I suggest that you decline the offer, as a native OS/2 Adobe Acrobat reader is now available. (Download it for free from `www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html`—it's about 4 MB.)

Other help is available with

- Bubble help, which pops up when the mouse cursor moves over a SmartIcon in the SmartIcon Bar,



- Assistants to walk you through complex procedures, and
- "Ask the Expert," a help program that responds to questions that are typed in "plain English."

I had trouble with the Bubble help as, occasionally, after the mouse pointer evoked the bubble help for a given SmartIcon, the SmartIcon was rendered inoperational. This requires that I move the mouse pointer away from the "button" and then click on it again before the pointer activates the bubble help and locks me out again.

"Ask the Expert" is a very useful learning aid/resource. All you do is finish the sentence "How do I..." in your own words. It then searches for what it thinks are appropriate topics in the Help file. In most cases it guided me right to the topic that I needed. In one particular instance, though, I stumped it by trying to find out how to make the special typographical character called an "em dash" (like a hyphen, only the length of a lowercase letter "m"). I have learned how to do so, but apparently it is not documented in the Help file.

I like how "Ask the Expert" opens in a band above the document, as opposed to a window on top of the document. Most of the other "dialog box" type of functions such as the Spell checker, and the "Find and Replace" feature do this too. This avoids the problem of the "dialog box" being in the way and covering part of the text.

One of Word Pro 96's standout features is its InfoBox. An InfoBox is a task-sensitive control center for modifying properties of text, pages, frames, tables, table cells, headers, footers, columns, and Word Pro drawings. If text is selected, the text properties will be displayed. If a table is then selected, the InfoBox contents change to display table properties. The InfoBox floats on your screen and can be moved around anywhere in the Word Pro 96 workspace. It is easily minimized to a title bar by double-clicking the title bar. InfoBoxes have a variety of tabbed divisions, scrollable lists, check-boxes, and other interactive devices to control how a document looks and feels.

I encountered a little bug regarding the InfoBoxes that deals with the system color resolution. In the InfoBoxes, the check-boxes and spinner controls (little buttons which increase or decrease a value) display as completely black, so I could not tell if a check-box is checked or not. This happens when the system's display is set to more than 265 colors; I run at 65,536 colors. Technical support acknowledged this and suggested that I switch to 256 colors. They couldn't say whether Lotus is concerned enough to fix this problem.

SmartMasters

Word Pro 96 comes with 32 different templates, or SmartMasters, which provide layouts for common documents, such as memos, letters, and reports. These are really useful and give a professional appearance without having to fuss with the design and setup. All you need to do is type the contents in specified fields according to the prompts that are displayed. Once you have clicked in the field to begin typing the prompt disappears. It would be helpful if the prompt would persist somewhere, such as the title bar, dialog window, or in a field in the status bar, until the field is no longer active. I can imagine getting called away from my desk while filling out a SmartMaster and upon returning realizing that I don't remember what I was supposed to put in the selected field.

Internet

When I heard that Word Pro 96 was integrated with the Internet, I expected to be able to import a web page from a web server, edit the HTML, perhaps with the aid of an HTML button bar or other Internet specific tool, and upload the result to the Internet. In fact, Word Pro 96 has no HTML button bar, and not much in the line of Internet specific tools. What it *can* do is open files from the Internet (assuming that the files only have three letter extensions) and save files to the Internet via a built in ftp function. Even that has some surprising limitations.

I saved a file with a long file name to a directory on my ISPs server. With a separate, stand-alone ftp client I verified that the file was on the Unix ftp server. It was not recognized by the Word Pro ftp client when I tried to open the file. I figured out that this was because the file name included spaces. Word Pro's built-in client recognizes only the part of the long filename that is after the last space in the name. Oops!

There is an HTML SmartMaster, but when it is opened it looks like a blank gray page; I could find no information on it in the online help or the manual. Eventually I figured out that HTML codes are added to the document by applying text styles, which in the HTML SmartMaster, are HTML specific styles.

After I modified a simple document with the HTML SmartMaster, I uploaded it to my ISP's server. When I attempted to view it with Netscape Navigator all that displayed was a page full of gibberish. I'm sure that there is a way to do this successfully, but my point is that I found absolutely no instructions or help topics for creating or modifying HTML documents.

Miscellaneous observations

It took me a while to get used to selecting text with the keyboard in Word Pro 96. In Corel WordPerfect and Microsoft Word, text can be selected a character at a time by holding Ctrl and either the right or left arrow, and a word at a time by holding Ctrl+Shift and the right or left arrow. In Word Pro 96, using Shift and the arrow keys selects both one character at a time and a word at a time. When at the beginning or in the middle of a word, it assumes that ⇨

FixPak 1 vs intelligent I/O controllers

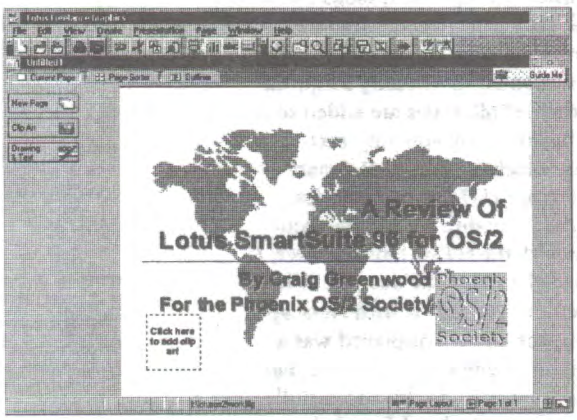
To fix the problem that FixPak 1 creates with systems that have multiple physical disks connected to an intelligent I/O controller card, do the following:

1. Install FixPak 1
2. Boot from floppies
3. Change directory to x:\OS2\BOOT (where "x" is your boot partition)
4. Rename IBM1S506.ADD to something like IBM1S506.FP1.
5. Copy IBM1S506.ADD from Install Disk 1 to x:\OS2\BOOT
6. Reboot the system

you want to select a character at a time. If you continue selecting beyond that word, it assumes that you want to select whole words, and so switches gears.

While I can understand the logic in this, it seems a bit counter intuitive since most of us are used to *moving* a word at a time with Ctrl+arrows, and *selecting* a word at a time with Ctrl+Shift+arrows. Word Pro 96's way also requires me to select every character in a word in order to select just that one word.

On a related issue—using the mouse— I find it convenient to select words, sentences, or paragraphs with a double-click, triple-click, or quad-click respectively. In Word Pro 96, double-clicking a word selects that word, but any other clicking sequence just adds extra wear and tear on the mouse. To be fair, a sentence, paragraph, or entire division can be selected from the Text menu (Text ➡ Select ➡ Sentence, for instance), but that is a bit out-of-the-way for most people to bother with.



One nicety that I do like is the little status bar that appears when I click on the page slider on the right edge of the document and drag it up or down. As the slider is moved, the status bar shows the division and page in the document, instead of requiring you to play that little psychic game where you guess what page will be displayed when you let up on the slider.

In a future version, I'd like an indication about the "saved" status of an open document. After I save a file I like the title bar to display the word "unmodified" after the filename so I know at a glance whether the file has changed since I last saved it, or if it would be beneficial to save it. Word Pro gives no such indication.

The timed back-up feature was a saving grace on a number of occasions, but it is a bit obnoxious to put up with. Every time it activates, the cursor freezes until the timed backup is done. Perhaps this is because Word Pro 96 is a port (using Open32) of a Windows product that is not threaded like a "coded for OS/2" application. This is something that should be done transparently on a background thread.

"Relative" problems

Other evidence of Word Pro 96 being the handicapped stepbrother of a Windows application is the absence of active font updates. Cliff Cullum, author of the OS/2 font manager, FontFolder, explained to me that Windows sends a signal to all open applications notifying them when the list of installed fonts has changed. The application can then update its displayed list of installed fonts. In OS/2 an application can provide an updated list in several ways. An application can periodically run a background thread polling the OS to find out if the list of installed fonts has changed; if so, the application can update its font list. Another option is for the application to update the list of available fonts each time its font list is displayed. Word Pro 96 (and Freelance Graphics) apparently does neither.

I tested this by launching Word Pro 96 and then, using FontFolder, adding several fonts to the system. After leaving my computer on all night, with Word Pro 96 open, the next morning none of the additional fonts were listed as options in Word Pro 96; it had no idea that the list of installed fonts had changed. As a result, we can not install fonts on the fly (and save system resources by not having all our fonts installed all the time) and expect to use them in a current session of Word Pro 96.

Another Windows trait that Word Pro 96 inherited is hogging the processor while it is launching, leaving me to sit and watch the clock cursor in the meantime.

Fatal distraction

When importing a WMF file, Word Pro 96 closes up and goes away. It does the same thing when attempting to paste a WMF from the clipboard.

While I was doing a "find and replace" for an entire document, the program seemed to get stuck in a loop, which necessitated the services of Watchcat to kill the process (and consequently, I lost some data).

Freelance 96

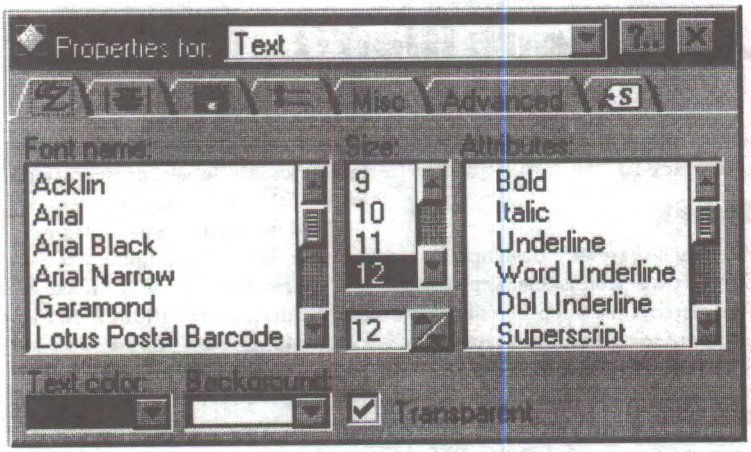
This program has a similar look to Word Pro 96 and uses some of the same major tools, including InfoBoxes, SmartIcons, View Tabs, a Status Bar, and SmartMasters. Freelance Graphics has three primary views: Current Page view, Sorter view, and Outliner view.

The **Current Page** view is where pages are laid out or constructed. The **Sorter View** is a global view of the presentation, with light table thumbnails that you can rearrange, copy, and delete. In the **Outliner View**, page thumbnails are arranged along the left side; on the right, the text content is presented as an outline to be edited, formatted, moved, etc.

A presentation page can be made up of a title, bulleted lists, text blocks, data charts, diagrams, organizational charts, clip art, tables, and drawings. A "toolbox" is available for drawing flowchart elements. Clip art can easily be added, as well as premade diagrams that are included. The diagrams are easily modified so it is fairly easy to make just the one you need.

By selecting a SmartMaster and building on it, it is really easy to produce a great looking presentation quickly. It is simple to follow the "click here" instructions and the interface is rather intuitive. Some SmartMasters have charts with appropriate type and style already selected; you just enter your data to personalize it. SmartMasters even go so far as to have suggested generic content to help guide you through creating a presentation.

If you want to do something, but don't know how, click the "Guide Me" button. This neat little helper presents all the options you have at any given time and lets you select



from them. It then offers a list of sub-options, and eventually opens a page in the help file to give instructions for whatever it was that you wanted to do. Also, like Word Pro 96, the "Ask The Expert" option is available under the Help menu.

One simple little feature that I find very useful is a button on the status bar which toggles the display of the presentation between color and black-and-white. If your presentation will be on some sort of computer screen, by all means do it in full color. But if you need to print it out on a laser printer or submit a screen shot for a B&W magazine, this little button intelligently converts the presentation to gray scale, subduing the background image so the content is easily readable.

The manual is 76 pages including an index. It clearly states that it is not a user's guide, but rather a book of ideas about how to use Freelance Graphics efficiently. It does a good job of providing an overview of features and conceptual information.

SmartSuite 96 summary

The features of these products are so extensive that I have not been able to address a great number of them in the limited space of this article. But, hopefully, I have been able to give you a useful overview, along with a feel for my impressions from two months' experiences.

I like Word Pro 96 for several reasons, not the least of which is that I don't have to launch Windows code in order to run a full-featured word processor. I also like the InfoBoxes and the SmartMasters, and, overall, the customer support has been good.

The cross-platform compatibility is excellent. There is no difference between a document created in the OS/2 application and the same document when opened on a Windows 3.1 machine running Word Pro 96. This benefit is obvious if you ever need to exchange files with someone who uses the Windows version.

Combining the "save to/from the Internet" feature with cross-platform compatibility proved to be very useful. I can save a document to the Internet at home with my OS/2 machine, and when I get to work I can download it from the Internet with Word Pro 96 on a Windows system. This means that I always have access to the most current version without having to courier floppies back and forth between work and home. It really is pretty simple to do with the built in ftp client.

I was going to comment that Word Pro 96 is slow, but Freelance Graphics is *hound dog* slow—and I mean like an arthritic hound dog in January. It took over 15 seconds to switch between Current Page view and Outliner view, and vice-versa. It is quite disappointing to find that the 16 bit version runs faster on a 486DX-33 under native Windows 3.1 than on a 486DX-2x66 under OS/2.

My overall feeling about the OS/2 products in this suite is that they are *not quite ready for prime time*. There are so many "nickel and dime" bugs in Word Pro 96 that it seems very unprofessional. Wasn't this thing beta tested?

It is also very apparent that Word Pro 96 has been hamstrung by its Windows ancestry. Being a native OS/2 application is not the same as being written for OS/2. Running these programs is kind of like kissing your sister: sure, it is a kiss from a girl, but.... If I wanted Windows programs I would run Windows. These programs simply do not exploit the potential of OS/2, and that takes some of the pride out of ownership.

Is the Lotus SmartSuite 96 for you? That question is an easy one if you want cross-platform compatibility. Especially in light of the fact that if you get the SmartSuite 96 for OS/2 now, Lotus will give you a free upgrade to the rest of the applications when the OS/2 versions ship, which is reported to be by the end of the year.

If compatibility with Windows systems is not a concern, then you will want to consider a number of other factors in deciding if SmartSuite is for you. Do you already have a business suite that runs in Win-OS/2 which you are comfortable with? If so, maybe you just want a native word processor; there are a few others to select from. If you don't already have a suite, then an alternative to check out is StarOffice. I understand it is not as feature-rich, and customer support leaves something to be desired, but maybe the tradeoffs are worth it to you.

Whatever your need is, hopefully I have given you some information that will help you in deciding if Lotus SmartSuite 96 is right for you.

random bits

Music, graphics, games, and... nutrition?!

compiled by Esther Schindler

The software described here was recently released or updated. Unless otherwise specified, the shareware titles are available (along with full descriptions) at BMT Micro, `www.bmtmicro.com`.

Nota Musica

Do you play an instrument, and want to compose melodies? Nota Musica edits and arranges your notes: It creates scores, transposes, etc.—and it exploits the advantages of OS/2. Nota Musica allows you to play your tunes on both your keyboard and your sound card. Shareware.

tmidi

tmidi 2.0 is a VIO-based standard MIDI file player for OS/2. Plays rock-solid under the heaviest of multitasking chores. Able to support more than one MPU (32 channels). Able to select tracks to play. Includes all needed files. For OS/2 Warp or later. MPU/UART (DB50XG, SCD-55, etc. GM/GS/XG/+). Shareware; registration is $14.75.

Beatles Song Index

The Beatles Song Index is a hypertext-based electronic book to all the songs and song versions the Beatles have recorded and authorized for publication. The new anthology albums are already included! Shareware; registration is $60.

REXX Code Formatter

REXX Code Formatter/2 is a REXX utility designed to help a programmer produce a clean, professional looking program. It does this by allowing you to convert any normal REXX program into a consistently formatted set of program statements with just about any style desired. Shareware, registration is $15.

INIEdit/2

INIEdit/2 is a 32 bit multithreaded OS/2 application that allows extensive editing of binary OS/2 INI files. You can easily edit files by using the simple point and click method. Features such as the INI Tree and built in editor allow for easy navigation and editing of files. Shareware; registration is $10.

SecureIt

Are you a shareware developer? SecureIt is a professional key generation system that will protect the time you have invested in your program. Shareware; registration is $149.

amixer

amixer 1.0 is non-MMPM/2, PM mixer for all Creative Labs Sound Blaster sound cards (SB2CD, SBPro, SB16+, 1335, 1345, 1745, etc.). It also includes tmidi, a perfect MPU SMF player for OS/2. Shareware; registration is $13.75.

SwapMonitor 2.0

SwapMonitor displays the SWAPPER.DAT file size in a small window on your desktop, and warns you when the size changes.

In addition to monitoring your swap file, the program also includes a process killer, clock, and drive info (size, label, space, file system, etc.). If you have IBM's SPM/2, you can also display SWAPPER.DAT analysis, process analysis, memory analysis and working set measurements.

SwapMonitor is highly configurable and is fully WPS aware. Shareware, registration $15.00.

LogoArt 1.0

WORKLab System Solutions announces LogoArt for OS/2, a vector-orientated graphics application which comes with features like:

- Splines, fillets, multisplines and many other tools
- Bitmap objects, bitmap handling, import and export
- Vectorizing and conversion tool
- Interlaced GIF with color transparency (also USEMAP support for HTML-pages through the pipette)
- Bitmap-browser
- Fast creation of thumbnails
- Full workplace shell integration
- Lots of drag & drop
- More than 1000 clip art graphics in LogoArt Format

The suggested retail price for LogoArt is $89. This is an affordable tool for creating business cards, postcards, posters, labels, presentations, or any other graphical artwork.

To download a demo version, visit the WORKLab home page at `www.worklab.com`. WORKLab System Solutions CIS: 100022,2013 Fax: +49 89/540 710 74

Battleship

The Battleship computer game is based on the board game of the same name. The game consists of two game boards on which the players place 5 ships and a variable number of mines. A player takes a "shot" by specifying a spot on the opponents board from which the opponent responds with a "hit" or "miss" appropriately. When all the targets on a given ship are hit, the ship is considered sunk. The player that sinks his opponent's entire fleet is the winner. Sound is provided via the OS/2 multimedia classes.

Shareware, available on Compuserve in the OS2BVEN forum.

Meal Planner

Meal Planner allows you to keep track of foods and their nutritional value as well as plan your meals. Analyzes your eating patterns and prints out menu calendars. Meal Planner 1.5 includes a new calendaring module that allows you to see an entire month at a time. Updated reports and revamped interface. Shareware. Available in the OS2BVEN forum on Compuserve.

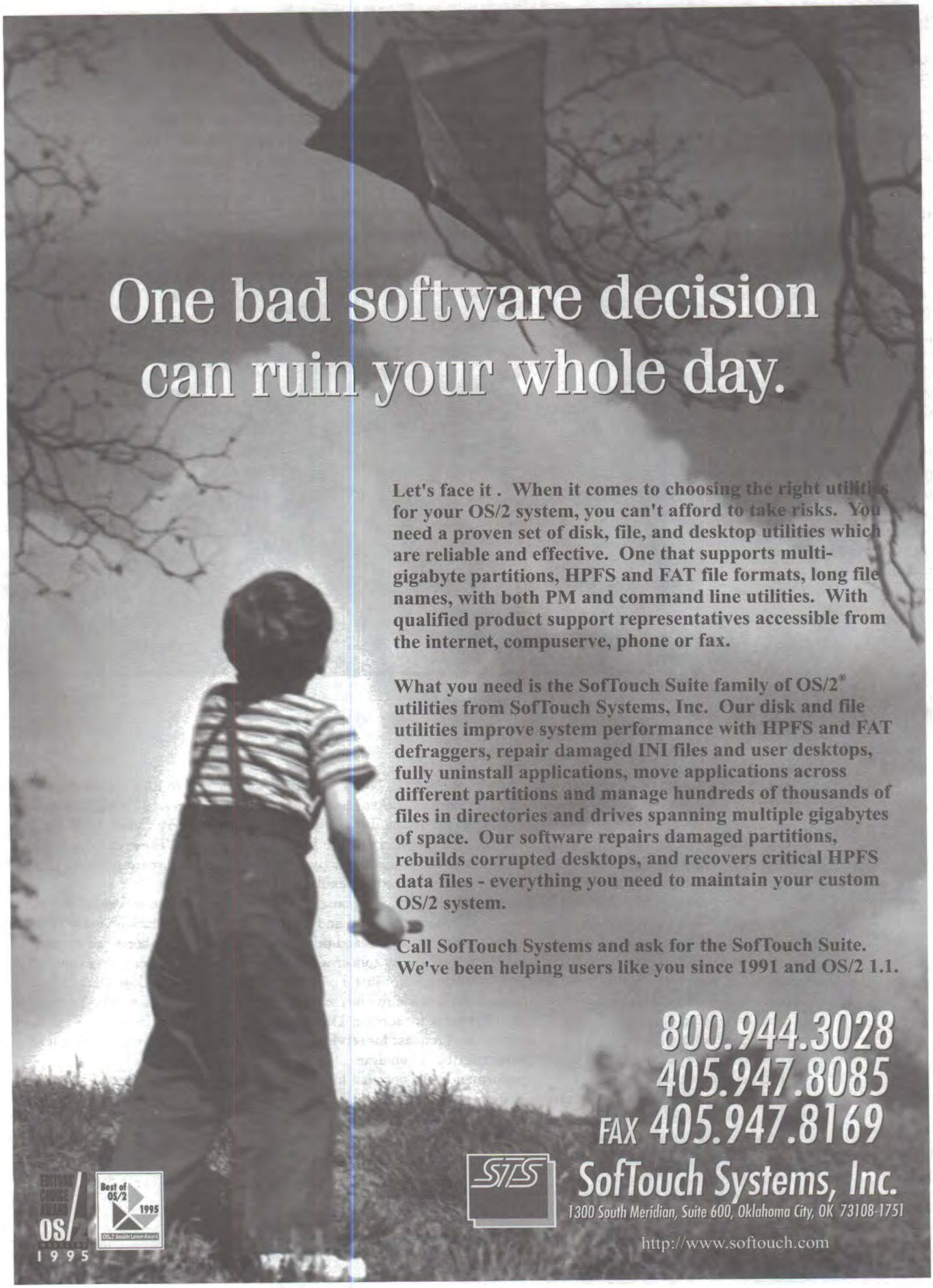
Talos V

The Xenos have captured your daughter and enslaved her along with thousands of others. After years of grueling training with the best mercenaries in the universe, you take on your mission with a vengeance. The most dangerous planet, TALOS V, awaits you.

Want more? Head over to `www.polyex.com`.

Galactic Civilizations Expansion Pack

Galactic Civilizations for OS/2 has won numerous awards and become known as one of the best strategy ⇨


One bad software decision
can ruin your whole day.
Let's face it . When it comes to choosing the right utilities for your OS/2 system, you can't afford to take risks. You need a proven set of disk, file, and desktop utilities which are reliable and effective. One that supports multi-gigabyte partitions, HPFS and FAT file formats, long file names, with both PM and command line utilities. With qualified product support representatives accessible from the internet, compuserve, phone or fax.
What you need is the SofTouch Suite family of OS/2® utilities from SofTouch Systems, Inc. Our disk and file utilities improve system performance with HPFS and FAT defraggers, repair damaged INI files and user desktops, fully uninstall applications, move applications across different partitions and manage hundreds of thousands of files in directories and drives spanning multiple gigabytes of space. Our software repairs damaged partitions, rebuilds corrupted desktops, and recovers critical HPFS data files - everything you need to maintain your custom OS/2 system.
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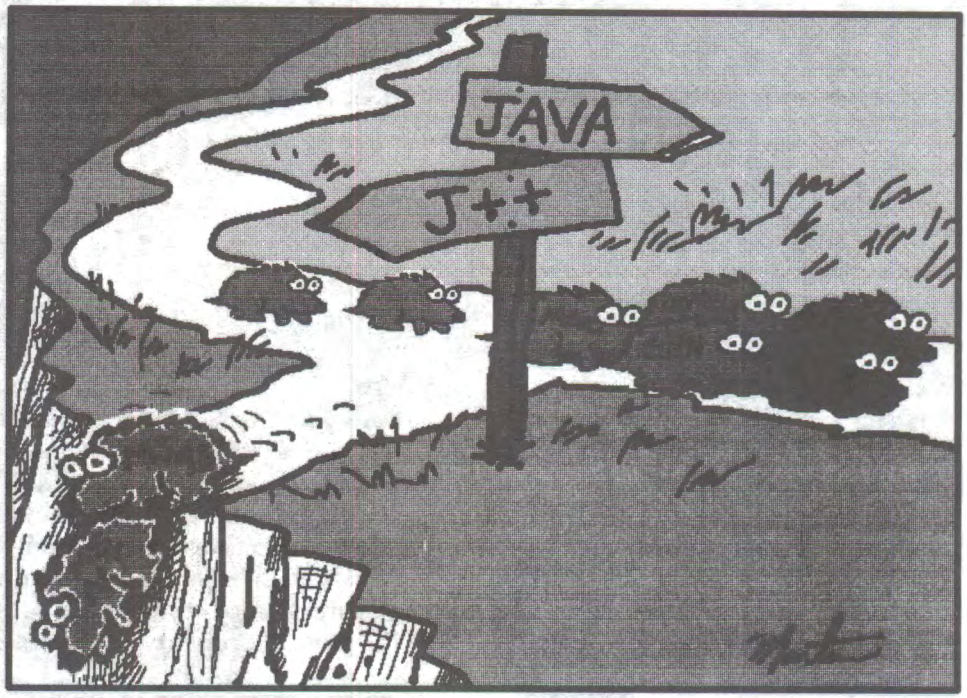
games of all time. With a combination of epic game play and advanced programming technology, Galactic Civilizations takes you to a new universe where only your imagination limits you.

Now, Stardock is releasing the Expansion pack for Galactic Civilizations II. The Expansion pack adds a host of new technologies, new star ships, and new graphics. It modifies the game and its rules based on years of feedback from GalCiv players. Planets can grow larger, technologies are more difficult to reach, the computer players are smarter, and the user interface is better. There's even a new opponent to face: the Ominorians.

Some of the new features include the ability to change all your military projects from one to another, eliminating the need for having to visit planet to planet. It is easier to work with star fleets; they will now stay together in a group as you send them to a distant part of the galaxy. A new type of ship, "The Odin Class," can see all the ships in a given quadrant regardless of their stealthy abilities.

The computer players aren't just smarter. In some cases, whole personalities have been rewritten from scratch to fit the strategies of expert GalCiv players. If you're very good at GalCiv, don't count on walking over the aliens this time.

Users can order and download the Expansion Pack from Stardock's web site: `www.stardock.com`. Its introductory price is $14.95.



.press release

Cyber-Alert released

Use of the Internet or a corporate Intranet is a golden opportunity to instantaneously get needed information, share ideas, and sell your products. The success of the "net" endeavors depends on customer acceptance, ease-of-use, and availability. Does your presence on the Internet or your corporate Intranet provide the accessibility, availability and performance needed to measure up to your expectations and strategies? Increasing numbers of IS executives are looking for ways to document the cost and value of Internet/intranet use.

To help you get those important facts, Cyber-Alert constantly monitors your Internet and Intranet servers. Designed for simple installation on a single OS/2 system with a TCP/IP connection to your net, it requires no other agents or remote installation.

Mail, Web, FTP, News, Gopher and your custom socket servers are monitored for availability. Continually updated graphics provide a visual display of availability. By checking those servers at regular intervals and logging responses, you can know what's going on and intelligently solve or understand performance or availability concerns.

Monitoring is not just a ping; a connection is made to each server with a request for service. This connection and request for service provides statistics to analyze performance. An optional log and analysis program lets you review each server by graphing and printing performance for connection and data transfer. Node performance data may be exported to your favorite spreadsheet or data base.

Cyber-Alert provides user exits for successful or failed connections. A sample exit in REXX provides a simple Web server allowing you to remotely query Cyber-Alert for server status. These exits provide a facility to automate recovery procedures.

Any detected server failure will provide a notification via SMTP Mail and/or make a phone call to your pager. You'll never need a user call to know a server is down!

Cyber-Alert is an OS/2 program and requires an Internet or Intranet connection and the installation of TCP/IP.

Contact Client Server Networking Inc at PO Box 370111, West Hartford, CT 06137-0111 or by phone at 860-233-2951.
`www.tiac.net/users/cs`

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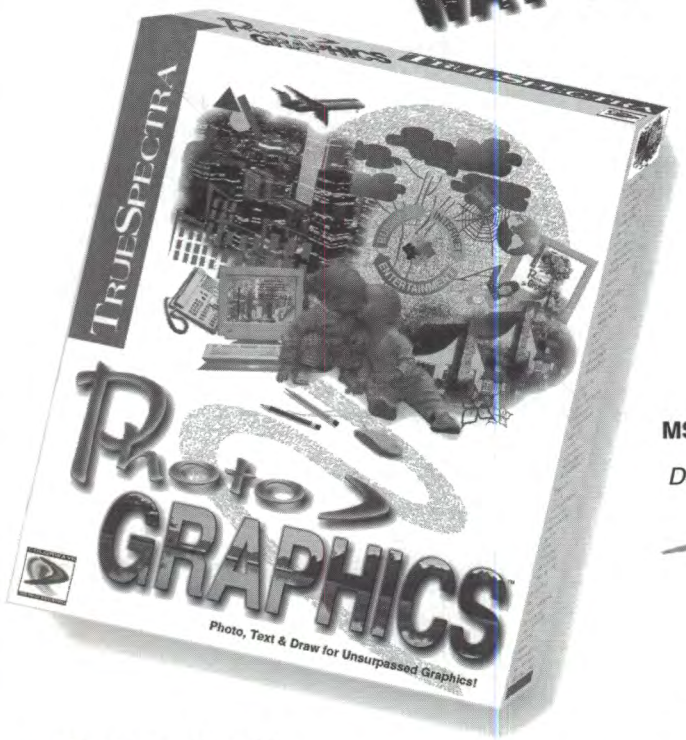

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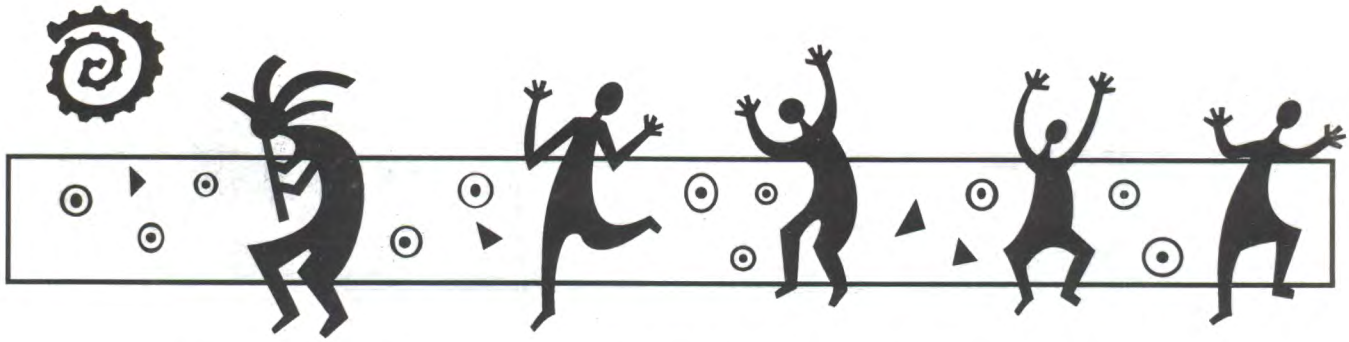

The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society is a computer user group dedicated to OS/2. We have been publishing our award-winning magazine, extended attributes since August of 1994, and we have members all over the world.

Yes, this is a user group publication, and that sometimes shows; however, that's also an advantage, since you get real-world feedback about OS/2 and OS/2 products from other users, not just jaded, cynical journalists.

How useful will it be to join the Phoenix OS/2 Society if you aren't in Arizona? We see the Phoenix OS/2 Society as something akin to the National Geographic Society or the Smithsonian; while most members only see a magazine, you're actually a member of a society, and can participate in its activities when you happen to be in the area.

Even without activities that take place in Phoenix, Society membership includes product discounts that alone could make membership worthwhile. Taking advantage of one such discount could easily save you the entire cost of membership, giving you a "free" subscription.

Plus, the Society is prominent in the computing community. We are *already* heard by IBM; they listen to what we say. Several IBM executives get extended attributes. They don't get it for the "club news"—they use it to learn what OS/2 users really care about. And they respond to what they read.

You're not just getting a magazine. You're getting a voice.

If you would like to continue to receive the magazine, fill out the membership card in the center of the magazine. We would love to have your voice join ours!

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